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THE LIVING GOD



Nathan Finkelstein

THE LIVING GOD
BASAL FORMS OF PERSONAL
RELIGION

THE GIFFORD LECTURES

DELIVERED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

BY

NATHAN SÖDERBLOM

LATE ARCHBISHOP OF UPSALA

WITH A

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION BY

DR. YNGVE BRILIOTH

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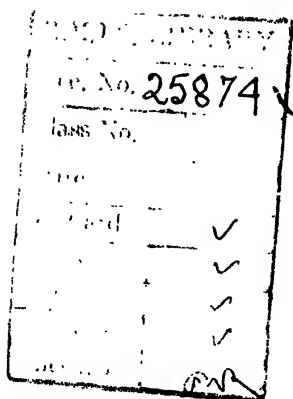
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EDITORS' PREFACE

THE family of the late Archbishop of Upsala, Dr. Nathan Söderblom, who were commissioned by the author to bring out his Gifford Lectures posthumously, desire to express their gratitude to those who have rendered their assistance with the publication of this book, in the first place to the Very Rev. Professor W. P. Paterson of Edinburgh and the Lord Bishop of Chichester, Dr. G. K. A. Bell. Further the Editors are indebted to Professor T. J. E. Andrae of Upsala, and to the Rev. F. D. Binyon and the Rev. C. Gordon-Wright of Chichester, for their help with the revision of the manuscript, and to Professor C. C. J. Webb of Oxford who, during his visit to Sweden this year, read the proofs. The Editors are very pleased that the Oxford University Press has undertaken the publication of the book.

UPSALA,

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FOREWORD

THE Gifford Lectureships were instituted in the four Scottish Universities in terms of a deed of foundation executed in 1885 by Adam Gifford, Senator of the College of Justice. The purpose was declared to be 'the promotion of Natural Theology, or the Knowledge of God'. It was provided that 'the lecturers shall not be required to emit or subscribe any declaration of belief, that they may be of any religion or way of thinking, or, as is sometimes said, they may be of no religion, or they may be called sceptics or agnostics or free-thinkers, provided only that the patrons will use diligence to secure that they be able reverent men, true thinkers, sincere lovers of and earnest inquirers after truth'. It was added that a lectureship should normally be held for the period of two years.

The Edinburgh series of lectures was initiated in 1890 by Hutchison Stirling, and the list of lecturers includes the names of William James, Bosanquet, Bergson, Stout, Pringle-Pattison, J. G. Frazer, and Eddington. In the treatment of Natural Theology there is a wide choice of method, and the series has illustrated every method of approach to the theological issue. It has been approached from the side of History, of Anthropology, of Metaphysics, of Ethics, of Psychology, and of Natural Science. One of the methods, illustrated by Pfeiderer and Tiele, has been to start with a study of the history of religions, or of an important section of the history, and thereafter to gather up, interpret, and appreciate the results of the historical investigation in the form of a contribution to the Philosophy of Religion. And it was on these lines that his task was naturally conceived and planned by Dr. Söderblom on his appointment for the period for 1921-2. On the scientific side he had the qualifications of a Professor of Comparative Religion who had done original work in the field of Oriental religions, and also advanced the discussion of the nature and the primitive form of religion in his fresh and important book, *Das Werden des Gottesglaubens*. On the other hand, his unique position in the religious life of Europe

in the post-war period—so vividly brought out in Dr. Brilioth's biographical sketch—was a guarantee that he would fully recognize the obligation of dealing with the vital issue as to the truth of the beliefs and the value of the experiences that have emerged in the historical process.

The first part of his Gifford course, which was given in Edinburgh in the summer of 1921, was in the main historical and psychological, the leading idea being to distinguish the principal types of religious experience, and to verify and illustrate them out of his rich stores of concrete material. In the second series of lectures he was expected to expound more fully a philosophy of religion based on the history of religion which had been outlined. His death prevented the completion of this task, but happily he had not confined himself at the first stage to the purely historical point of view, and the present volume sufficiently indicates and illustrates the nature of the argument which he had in mind when, almost with his last breath, he professed his faith in the living God, and claimed that it was proved.

The publication of Dr. Söderblom's 'Gifford Lectures' will be welcomed in Britain where he was widely known as a contributor to the Science of Religion, honoured as a prince of the Church, and beloved by many as a good man.

W. P. PATERSON.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

A BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

By DR. YNGVE BRILIOTH

THE diocese of Upsala which in earlier times extended into the far north, even beyond the actual boundary between Sweden and Finland, still comprises not only Uppland, the ancient centre of the Swedish realm, but also two provinces of northern Sweden, Gästrikland, and Hälsingland. As archbishop, Dr. Söderblom used to compare the three provinces with Judaea, Samaria, and Galilee. Hälsingland, the province of forests and hills, of rivers and smiling lakes, with its stubborn people, sometimes violent but also easily stirred by fervent preachers of the Christian message—Hälsingland was his Galilee, the land of his infancy and early impressions.

His father, Jonas Söderblom, came from a line of independent yeomen, some of whom were excellent examples of that Swedish peasant aristocracy to which other countries offer but few counterparts. In his early life Jonas Söderblom had been deeply influenced by that strong wave of religious revival which passed over Sweden in the nineteenth century. Having passed himself from the fear of the law to the gospel of freedom, he became an untiring preacher of evangelical Christianity; and his consuming zeal, combined with an ascetic life, made him a trusted spiritual adviser to many souls. There are obvious points of contact between the temperaments of father and son. The relentless energy, unsparing of resources of body and soul, the restless swiftness as of one who has to deliver a message that must not tarry, were the same. But what in the father appeared as an eccentric quaintness, which has made him somewhat of a legendary personality in the parishes where he worked, was in the son harmonized into the fire of creative genius. From his mother, the daughter of a Danish physician who had settled in Sweden, he inherited with the striking fairness of his complexion a sweetness of temper which was strangely and happily blended with, and to a casual observer sometimes hid, the stern and resolute energy which lay behind.

When the future archbishop was born, on January 15th, 1866, the father was priest in the parish of Trönö, where he remained for seven years. Later he served as rector successively in the parishes of Bjuråker, Hälsingtuna, and Norrala. He died in 1901. To the son who had hastened to his death-bed from Paris, he bequeathed as the principle of pastoral work a characteristic free combination of two Bible passages (1 Pet. v. 3; 2 Cor. i. 24): 'Not as being lords over God's heritage but as helpers of your joy.' This sentence the archbishop used in his pastoral letter of 1914, and on his death-bed he handed it on to those present.

The life of the home was characterized by a stern simplicity. During the vacations the future archbishop with his brothers—he was the oldest in a family of five—took an active part in the work on the glebeland. But the most important part of his paternal heritage was undoubtedly the early impression of a fervent religion. This made it easy for him in later times to sympathize also with simple and popular forms of piety. As a theologian he could never be satisfied with a clear-cut, rational form of theology; as an historian of religions he was ever ready to acknowledge, even in strange and perverted rites, the expression of man's perpetual, unquenchable *élan vers Dieu*. During an intellectual crisis of faith which an academic training made almost inevitable for a serious lad from an old-fashioned country parsonage, a deep personal experience which had in it something of a conversion gave to the Cross a centrality in his inner life which it always preserved. Only indirectly and with shy reticence could he unveil, in some of his sermons, how a book of devotion which a country woman once lent to a young student had made the words in S. John iii. 14, 15 living to him, so that he saw as never before the stupendous fact of the Crucified Saviour.

Nathan Söderblom went to school in the provincial town of Hudiksvall. In 1883 he entered the University of Upsala. Three years later he took his arts' degree (candidate of philosophy) with honours in classical and oriental languages, and began reading for a higher degree in divinity (candidate of theology), which according to the syllabus then in force

required extensive reading in all the main branches of theology. It took him six years.

His student years coincided with an important crisis in the intellectual life of the university, when a youthful radicalism began its attack on traditional values, and many minds were set aflame with a new zeal for social righteousness. It was a critical time not least in the field of theology. Söderblom belonged to a set of theological students who eagerly looked forward to a new reformation, in which the creative principles of Luther's reformation should again become active, co-operating with what was best in the new age. The influence of German theology was combined with a new enthusiasm for the original ideas of the Lutheran reformation. In 1893 he published a small book on *The Religion of Luther*, and all through his life he remained an eager student of the German reformer. The theological faculty remained as yet untouched by recent theological movements, and was not too indulgent towards those of its young pupils who confronted it with problems and ideas which appeared to be subversive of traditional orthodoxy. To Söderblom and his friends, acquaintance with the theology of A. Ritschl meant release from the bondage of verbal biblicism. Revelation became a living, growing reality, not a cut-and-dried system of deductions from an infallible sacred book. But he always felt that the ethical dogmatism of the German scholar failed to do full justice to the essentially dynamic character of vital religion. It became the continual effort of his life as scholar and churchman to combine with the deepest elements of the Christian faith an enthusiastic openness for all new discoveries, for real thorough-going scientific investigation, for the creative activities of literary and artistic genius; for genius to him always had its peculiar place in the economy of revelation. The careful weighing of utterances was never his peculiar gift, and to many good people he appeared, even after his promotion to the highest office in the Church, to be the dangerous champion of a destructive liberalism.

Two influences had a decisive importance for his early development. He took an active part in the religious societies of the university town—in the Y.M.C.A., and particularly

in the Students' Mission Society. Here the missionary interest showed itself not least in a serious study of the conditions in the mission field. This undoubtedly gave Söderblom an impulse towards the scientific study of the history of religions. In 1890 he attended as the representative of the Swedish students the student conference in Northfield, U.S.A., where he heard Moody, and made the acquaintance of J. R. Mott. For the first time the vision of a church universal, above the traditional ecclesiastical boundaries, made an impression on his youthful mind. He wrote in his diary the prophetic prayer: 'Lord, give me humility and wisdom to serve the great cause of the free unity of thy Church.'

After his theological degree he began working on a thesis in order to qualify himself for a university lectureship. In 1893 we find him started on his Iranian studies, a bold enterprise, outside the traditional limits of theological research. But from the beginning the history of religions stood for him in organic relation to the central problems of divinity; this is typical of all his work in this field, and characterizes also his Gifford Lectures. He always claimed that none can enter into the world of religion who himself stands outside religious experience. His Christian faith never tempted him to give to other religions less than their due; nothing was allowed to impair his sympathetic entering into other religious systems. To describe them in their concrete originality, without simplification or hasty constructions, was to him the scholar's task. That the utmost generosity in their presentation, and the recognition of genuine sparks of revelation in the most unlikely surroundings could only make the supreme revelation more wonderful, was a conviction of his heart which he never found disproved by reason.

His work in Upsala, however, was soon broken off. As president of the corporation of students at the university his personal charm and his power as a speaker had become widely known; but his activities were soon transferred to a new sphere. In 1893 he was ordained, and, having served for a time as chaplain to an asylum, he accepted in 1894 the chaplaincy to the Swedish legation in Paris, which included also the cure of the Swedish congregation in that city.

He married in the same year Anna Forsell, who became his faithful companion through life in a union of rare beauty, the mother of a large family, the sharer of his loftiest aspirations, and the custodian of his spiritual heritage. The seven years which he spent in Paris were of decisive importance. He became intimately acquainted with French life and civilization, and acquired a mastery of the language, such as he never attained in quite the same degree in German and English, however fluently they came later to his tongue. Here he also acquired that larger, international outlook, that European mind, which was later to give him a unique position amongst Swedish churchmen. His manifold activities for the spiritual and to a large extent also for the temporal welfare of the Swedish colony in the French capital cannot be recorded here. The close contact into which he was brought with Swedish artists who were studying in Paris favoured the growth of his aesthetic sense, and from this time he counted amongst his friends some of the greatest men in modern Swedish art and literature.

It required his extraordinary capacity for work to find time for studies and literary work in the midst of his multifarious occupations as minister to this heterogeneous congregation, which contained also many poor people who had a special claim on the care of their pastor. Yet he missed none of those opportunities which Paris offered for the pursuit of his special line of work. He studied Iranian languages as the pupil of A. Meillet; L. Marillier and A. and J. Réville became his teachers in the history of religions. He attached himself to the Protestant faculty of theology at the Sorbonne, the only faculty of divinity existing in Paris. Auguste Sabatier came to exercise a deep influence on the theological development of the Swedish pastor, who yet could not help feeling that the Protestant Paris school of divinity had no real grasp of the person of Christ and of the mystery of the Cross as the centre of vital Christianity.

In 1899 he published a study of early Persian religion, *Les Fravashis*, by which he gained the title of 'Élève diplômé de l'École des hautes Études'. It was followed two years later by *La Vie future d'après le Mazdéisme*, presented as his

thesis for the doctorate at the theological faculty of the Sorbonne. Söderblom was the only foreigner who gained this distinction during the time this faculty existed. In this work he investigates the eschatology of the early Persian religion against the background of similar conceptions in other religions. It is marked by exact scholarship and deep erudition; and it secured for its author a recognized place amongst students of comparative religion. He was soon mentioned as one of the candidates for the chair of the history of religions at Leyden, vacant through the death of C. P. Tiele. Söderblom was later to revise through several editions the widely read compendium of the history of religions by the Dutch master.

In 1901 Söderblom was appointed professor of theology at his old university of Upsala. The chair which he came to occupy carries the somewhat enigmatic designation 'theological prenotions and theological encyclopaedia'. Although the philosophy and psychology of religion still remain as parts of this subject, it has become, chiefly through Söderblom, a professorship in the history of religions. It is impossible within this brief space to make clear his influence as a university teacher. During his time the theological faculty of Upsala experienced a revival almost without parallel in its previous history. Certainly other names must also be remembered in this connexion, in the first instance those of E. Stave and E. Billing; but in a special way Söderblom gave a new impetus. The words which he addressed to the students after his introductory lecture sounded as a bold and stirring trumpet-call:

There are many that pity you. I must congratulate you. . . . I speak in order to congratulate you with all my heart on your present study, to carry on the study of theology in this time, and on your future vocation. . . . I congratulate you on those with whom you will hold converse, an Amos, an Hosea, an Isaiah, a Jeremiah, a Paul, an Augustine, a Francis, a Luther, a Pascal, a Kierkegaard, and high above them all the Master, Jesus the Lord, who grows before our eyes, the nearer we come to Him, and whom you, freed by being tied to His yoke, will show to your brethren. The heart of man will reveal to you its inner-

most secret, its longing after God; even in gloomy periods, in the darkness of ignorance and sin, this longing will shine to you as a holy fire, in the light of which you will divine or apprehend much that was contradictory or hidden from you. In the superstitious rites and the confused animism of the savage, for which the ignorant have only contempt, you will discover the sense of the infinite. In those dogmatic formulae of the Christian Church which are most remote from the ideas of the contemporary world, formulae for which the ignorant have only rejection, you will discover the consoling truths of salvation. . . . You have a secret confidant in every human heart, in so far as you serve the cause of Christ. By revealing the truth you will commend yourself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The Lord kindle and preserve in your hearts the holy fire.

He was bold enough to claim for theology, which had for long been looked upon as a decayed relic from unenlightened times, its place in the first rank amongst the schools of the university. The Swedish professors of theology are still members of the chapters of Upsala and Lund respectively; in Söderblom's time they were also prebendaries of country churches in the neighbourhood. His own prebend, Holy Trinity, lay in the town itself. He made its pulpit a complement to his academic chair, glorying in the union of church and university. He opened his home, a small parsonage outside the town, to the students who were always welcome there on Monday evenings. Many a shy and faint-hearted youth gathered new courage through the inspiring personality of the professor, and was led to dream of great things. He seemed in possession of a magic wand that could transform the study of theology and the service of the Church, to many perhaps a heavy and depressing task, into a thrilling spiritual adventure. In 1908 a movement sprang up amongst the students, known as 'the young Church movement', which hoisted the banner of the historic national Church as God's great gift to the Swedish people, the symbol and vehicle of His prevenient grace; and to this movement the influence of Söderblom's teaching undoubtedly gave a strong impulse. But the place of the idea of the Church in his thinking is a wide subject upon which we cannot here enter.

The years of his professorship at Upsala were fruitful

also in literary production. With regard to the central theological problems great importance must be attached to the essay *Uppenbarelsereligion* ('The Religion of Revelation') of 1903. Against the background of the now almost forgotten Bibel-Babel controversy Söderblom elaborated his conception of Revelation; Revelation was always one of the keywords in his theology. We here meet *in nuce* many of the trends of thoughts which in an amplified form occur later in his writings, not least in this volume of Gifford Lectures: the energetic insistence upon the religious life as a separate province of experience, not to be identified with the moral; the distinction between 'prophetic' religions, which go back to a personal founder, and the religions of 'nature and culture'; between the 'mysticism of the infinite' and 'the mysticism of personal life'. In an academic programme of 1911 we meet the ideas of the living God as the peculiar concept of Christian faith, and of continuing revelation, which form the themes of a large part of these lectures. The very interesting and suggestive book of 1910, *Religionsproblemet inom katolicism och protestantism* ('The Religious Problem in Catholicism and Protestantism') gives an admirable analysis of contemporary Roman Catholic modernism; Söderblom knew Loisy and became later the personal friend of Baron F. von Hügel. The essay *The Place of the Christian Trinity and the Buddhist Triratna amongst Holy Triads*, read as a paper to the third International Congress for the History of Religions (printed in the Transactions of the Society, vol. ii, Oxford, 1908), was printed in a fuller form in German in the following year.

When the theological faculty of Leipzig had decided to introduce the history of religions in its curriculum, the choice of the faculty fell on the Swedish professor; though he had already declined a similar offer from Berlin. By special arrangement he was able to retain his chair in Upsala together with the professorship in Leipzig, which he held during the years 1912-14. During this time he entered more fully than before into German theology and Church life. His position as member of a decidedly Lutheran Faculty—amongst his colleagues were such men as A. Hauck, R. Kittel, and L. Ihmels—and his renewed acquaintance with the classical

places of the Reformation gave fresh strength to his profound conviction of Martin Luther's unique place in the history of 'continued revelation'. Several years later he published a volume of studies on Luther (*Humor och melankoli och andra Lutherstudier*, 1919) which gave him a place of honour amongst those Lutheran scholars who have in recent years endeavoured to reaffirm the original message of the reformer, disengaging it from the obscuring growth of later Lutheran scholasticism. It was with good reason that he, as archbishop, came to stand before the world as the great Lutheran.

During the Leipzig years he was, however, able to devote himself more fully than ever before to his special field of inquiry, the history of religions. Personal testimonies bear witness to the influence of his academic teaching. Amongst the belongings that a German student, killed in the War, had carried with him into the trenches was found the bulky volume *La Vie future d'après le Mazdéisme*. In the small book *Natürliche Theologie und allgemeine Religionsgeschichte* (1913, enlarged Swedish edition 1914) he dwells on the idea of the general revelation which he wishes to interpret in the light of the history of religions. But his most important work in this field is the book *Gudstrons uppkomst* ('Origin of the Belief in God', 1914: German editions with the title 'Das Werden des Gottesglaubens' in 1916 and 1922). In an illuminating article in Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* on 'Holiness' (1913) he had put forward the view that the fundamental conception of religion is not the idea of God, but the idea of 'the holy': 'Holiness is the great word in religion; it is even more essential than the notion of God. Real religion may exist without a definite conception of divinity, but there is no real religion without a distinction between holy and profane.' This theory, which in some respects anticipates R. Otto's well-known treatise on *The Holy*, is worked out more fully in the larger work, where it is combined with a masterly analysis of the main original forms of the idea of God.

In the end of 1913 the archiepiscopal see of Upsala became vacant through the death of the humble and saintly Dr. J. A. Ekman—who had been Söderblom's predecessor as professor at the university. The appointment of an

archbishop is a complicated business in Sweden. Each of the electing bodies (the twelve chapters, the consistory of Stockholm, the university of Upsala, and the clergy of the diocese) send in three names, and the final list of three is presented to the King in cabinet who appoints one of them. The two first places in the list this time were occupied by well-known bishops (with 15 and 13 votes each); since the lot in one of the chapters had fallen to him, Dr. Söderblom with 6 votes obtained the third place. His appointment was a bold act, which was severely criticized by some of the conservative clergy; but to-day very few would dare to deny that Söderblom ranks with the most eminent occupants of the see. Perhaps none of his predecessors come up to him with regard to brilliant personal equipment. During the seventeen years which he held the office he made it a factor in the universal Church as it had never been since the first occupant was consecrated at Sens in 1164 by the archbishop of Lund in the presence of the exiled Alexander III.

Amongst the duties of an Archbishop of Upsala the care of the large diocese holds the first place, and this was a fact which the new archbishop never allowed himself to forget. Even during the busy months preceding the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work in Stockholm he found time to visit rural parishes. Besides the weekly duty of presiding in the chapter, which in Sweden is the governing body of the diocese, a bishop has to ordain, to institute incumbents, to consecrate churches, and to 'visit' the parishes. Hardly any contemporary bishop, and few earlier, have fulfilled these duties more assiduously. Dr. Söderblom had the rare gift of creating a festival atmosphere wherever he went. 'To be a helper to their joy' became a true description of his episcopal intercourse with congregations and individuals. He moved with a natural grace in the ancient, traditional forms of worship which the Church of Sweden has preserved more faithfully than its Lutheran sister churches. The splendour which often surrounded the occasions on which he officiated sometimes called forth unfriendly criticism; but he was never a ritualist in the narrow sense of the word. He never allowed traditional rules to fetter his movements. Once when the

ancient episcopal staff had not been forthcoming at the institution of a rector, the congregation must have been somewhat astonished to see the archbishop walk in the procession carrying a young birch-rod in his hand.

The visitation of a Swedish bishop is a very real 'visitation'. The diocesan mostly visits some of the schools in the parish; he examines and talks to the children in the church, he discusses with the incumbent and the church council the condition of the parish. The Sunday service often includes an examination of the confirmation candidates from the last two years, and Dr. Söderblom sometimes extended the examination to the older members of the congregation; it includes also a regular 'church session' where practical questions may be discussed, and an exhortation by the visiting bishop. Some of those who had seen the archbishop in various occupations never admired him more, perhaps, than when he talked to a group of rustic children, eliciting through his natural kindness their eager answers, or when he gave a simple, devotional address to a country congregation. He was a competent musician, and his singing of the liturgy revealed to many its half-forgotten beauty.

The constitution of the Swedish Church does not concede to the archbishop more than a primacy of honour, each diocese being in a high degree ecclesiastically independent; but recent developments have tended to accentuate the central activities of the Church, and thereby have added to the responsibility of the archbishop. As president of the Church Assembly, the Board of Missions and the Board of Diacony, he is the servant of the national Church as a whole. Further, his relations to the royal family give him opportunities and duties of a peculiar kind. If Dr. Söderblom came to stand before the country in a special way as the representative of the Church, that was to a large extent due to his personal gifts. His words of counsel or censure were listened to by a larger audience than is nowadays usually granted to ecclesiastical orators. That the Church should keep in touch with all that was good in the national life, that it should stand for justice and peace, that it should encourage scientific research as well as creative artistic genius, was to him not the

dictate of political prudence, but the natural consequence of his ideal of a Church, as well as of his personal sympathies. The pro-chancellorship of the University of Upsala, which still makes the archbishop the highest local authority of that learned body, was a duty which he highly valued. Besides this, he retained as archbishop the governorship of the Olaus Petri foundation in that university. In 1908 an anonymous giver had placed at his disposal a sum for the furtherance of the study of religion, with the view of inviting foreign scholars to give regular series of lectures. Amongst those who thus came to lecture, at the invitation of Dr. Söderblom as professor and as archbishop, may be mentioned R. Eucken, W. Herrmann, A. Hauck, R. Kittel, F. Cumont, E. Lehmann, A. Deissmann, A. J. Carlyle, and H. H. Henson; C. C. J. Webb and F. Heiler have delivered these lectures since the archbishop's death. Several series were devoted during the years 1910-20 to the question of Church unity.

It was only natural that many should see in him a disturber of the peace of the Swedish Zion, and take offence at the manner in which he made the Church felt as a living power in the land, acting not only as a minister to those that had the gospel, but also as a messenger of hope and charity to those who felt themselves to be outside the ecclesiastical boundaries. The verdict must be left to posterity. He was truly the archbishop of Sweden, and leading churchmen of our neighbouring countries have testified that he gained a real primacy of the Scandinavian churches through what he was and did, or rather what was done through him. It should be mentioned here that the tradition of holding Scandinavian episcopal conferences began through his initiative, and that the first Lutheran bishops of Esthonia, Latvia, and Slovakia were consecrated by him to their offices.

The archbishop became known outside Sweden as a champion of Church unity and world peace. The ideals of the unity of Christendom and the brotherhood of nations had never lost the grasp they once got of his youthful mind. His whole career, which had made him familiar with all the leading European peoples, seemed providentially ordered to equip him for his task; and it made him feel the

tragedy of the War with a peculiar acuteness. His early efforts to organize a conference of churchmen from the belligerent countries in order to testify to the supra-national character of the Church could not be realized during the War, but it gave rise to the Life and Work Movement, which stands to-day, besides the Faith and Order Movement and the World Alliance, as one of the instruments of the movement for Church Unity. The Stockholm Conference on Life and Work in 1922 became the first great manifestation of the new spirit of brotherhood and understanding which has begun to characterize the relations between the Christian communions. The planning and organization of this Conference was in a very high degree the personal achievement of the archbishop. He showed here his immense capacity for taking pains. The almost superhuman effort which lay behind the Conference can only be fully estimated by those who worked with him. But to him the experience of Stockholm was one of the great joys of his life. In his closing address he gave utterance to his own experience:

All wise people thought it impossible. One can easily prove from obvious facts, weighing one power against the other, that such a thing could never have happened or been accomplished under the circumstances. But an imponderable factor was involved, which could not be thus estimated. That imponderable factor is called faith: faith that believes the impossible, because it believes in God. But human eyes could not foresee the event. It was not accomplished with ease; on the contrary, it was only accomplished with the utmost exertion of every power; it was necessary to give out every ounce of will and every drop of blood, straining to the utmost the forces of soul and body and spirit. The champions of the cause stood on the verge of defeat. Just a little, seemingly insignificant superiority—as when in a race one runner comes in a half second before the other—and the thing was achieved. What seems to us self-evident proved to be the necessary result of many series of deep-lying causes that came into existence, humanly speaking, through the unreserved and desperate exertions of a few poor human beings.

It is possible here only to touch with the greatest brevity on this great enterprise, of which the Stockholm Conference was only the most conspicuous scene.

One of the most impressive features of the conference had been the co-operation of the Orthodox Church. The presence of the weighty delegation of the eastern churches, headed by the venerable patriarch of Alexandria, Photios, was largely due to the personal efforts of the archbishop. At the closing service in the cathedral of Upsala the Nicene creed was read by the successor of Athanasius, who died in Zürich on the way back from the far country, to which he had gone on an adventure of faith. The archbishop himself has preserved in his great book on the Stockholm Conference, the scene in a country church in Sweden, when the news of the patriarch's death reached him. At a visitation shortly after the conference, Dr. Deissmann, the famous biblical scholar, had been asked to preach. He was explaining, with the aid of an interpreter, the meaning of the conference to the rustic congregation. With reference to the Gospel of the day, the good Samaritan, he spoke of the part taken by the patriarch. Some one then whispered to the archbishop that the patriarch had just died. After the sermon he imparted the news to the preacher. His answer was: 'Nunc dimittis'. There is in this scene something that suggests the dawning of a new epoch in the history of the Church.

The archbishop took an active part also in other branches of the ecumenical movement. He was present at the Lausanne Conference, and his personal friendship with Bishop Brent did much to prevent any misunderstanding from springing up between these two equally important branches of the movement. That it proved impossible to secure the co-operation of the Roman Church was to him a real grief. In the very extensive literary production in which he deals with the question of Church unity it must suffice to mention here the book *Christian Fellowship* (New York and Chicago, 1922); his great Swedish account of the Stockholm Conference, which remains the most illuminating document as to his own ideals and impressions; and his answer to the Jesuit M. Pribilla, who had written an interesting study on the unity movement. This answer was published posthumously in 1921. When the Norwegian Parliament (Storting) in 1920 awarded the archbishop the Nobel peace prize, this was a highly valued

recognition not only of his personal endeavours but also of the part played by the Church in the work for international reconciliation.

The Church of Sweden was through him brought out of the provincial isolation in which it had lived on the whole since the Reformation. There are many sides to this development. The relations with other Lutheran Churches, in the first place the Scandinavian sister Churches, have been noted already. The archbishop's American journey in 1922 was important not least because it brought him into personal contact with the Swedish Augustana Synod and other Lutheran Churches in the United States. One other side, however, must here be briefly mentioned. When in 1908 the Archbishop of Canterbury had written to the Archbishop of Upsala in order to investigate the possibilities of closer relations between the Churches of England and Sweden, it was largely due to the influence of Professor Söderblom that this overture was welcomed by the Swedish primate and a Swedish bishop sent out who addressed the Lambeth Conference in 1908. This led in turn to the sending of an Anglican Commission to Sweden in 1909, under the presidency of Bishop John Wordsworth, and finally to the recommendation of intercommunion by the Lambeth Conference of 1920. This was answered by a letter from the Swedish bishops in 1922, in which similar recommendations were made. The agreement thus reached became the symbol of a real, personal, and spiritual intercourse, to which there is no parallel to be found since the time of the English missionaries to Sweden in the eleventh century. The archbishop had many English friends—it must suffice here only to mention a few names: Bishop Wordsworth, Chancellor Bernard, Bishop Ryle, Canon Mason—all members of the Anglican Commission of 1909; the present Bishop of Durham (Dr. Henson), the late Lord Davidson, the late Bishops of Winchester (Dr. Woods), and Oxford (Dr. Burge), and the Bishop of Chichester (Dr. Bell)—the last three his fellow workers in the Life and Work Movement; the Bishop of Gloucester (Dr. Headlam) and the Archbishop of York (Dr. Temple); amongst laymen Lord and Lady Parmoor; and in Scotland, Dr. Cooper,

Dr. Cairns, and Dr. W. P. Paterson. His Anglican relations by no means narrowed his ecclesiastical sympathies. He was the first Swede to preach in an English cathedral (Peterborough, 1921). In 1912 he gave lectures in the Oxford Summer School of Theology. These were followed by the Donellan Lectures in Dublin in 1922, and the Burge Memorial Lecture in 1922. Amongst the numerous honorary degrees which he received were also the Divinity degrees of St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Trinity College, Dublin, and the D.C.L. of Oxford.

The list of the archbishop's writings, articles, &c., comprises about 670 items, of which nearly 400 are subsequent to his appointment to the archbishopric. A large section of these deal with the problem of Christian unity. A vast number of sermons and occasional addresses, in magazines or separately printed, were the direct outcome of his episcopal work; many of these were gathered into larger collections and fill many volumes. To his mind there was no sharp dividing line between the devotional and the scientific, and he frequently brought the results of his thinking and investigation into the pulpit. His particular gifts as preacher were the freshness and the often startling originality of the treatment. A closer analysis of his printed sermons and addresses would show a tendency, growing in his later years, towards concentration round the central Christian message. He could bring actual everyday problems into the pulpit, but he would always strive to confront them with the Cross. His early religious experience, never forgotten, strongly reasserted itself, enriched through the labours and sufferings of later life. Most clearly can this be seen in his wonderful volume of meditations on the Passion, *Kristi pinas historia* ('The Story of the Passion of Christ'), 1921. It has been translated into Finnish and Dutch; an Anglo-Indian edition is being published for the use of the Swedish missions in southern India; and it is hoped that the central portion will appear also in England.

In earlier years Dr. Söderblom had suffered much from a severe internal trouble. At one time (1906) his life was in danger from ulceration, but repeated visits to Karlsbad

restored his health. During the first eleven years of his archiepiscopate he appeared to be in better health. But in 1922, partly owing no doubt to the exacting labours of the Stockholm Conference, disquieting signs of heart faintness became apparent. He recovered for a time and seemed as active as ever. But recurring attacks warned him that his day was drawing towards its end. Heavy troubles of a private character could not abate his energy, and seemed to casual observers hardly to dim his usual brightness. But those who saw closer discovered how they told on his strength, in spite of, or perhaps partly because of, a heroic self-control. When, however, he went to Scotland in the spring of 1921, after the heavy work of preparation for these lectures, which had not been allowed to encroach on his episcopal duties, he seemed to belie all gloomy forebodings; the weeks in Edinburgh were a joyful time when he could again lead the happy, studious life of a university professor. On July 7th he visited a small Anglo-Scandinavian theological conference that was gathered at Sparreholm in Sweden. On his return to Upsala he was taken ill with severe intestine pain. Three of the English visitors to the Sparreholm Conference stayed on in the country, and came to his house during his illness: but he would not hear of their going, and was busy even on his last day giving instructions for their entertainment. He also carried on other business in spite of pain and faintness. On July 10th, an operation proved necessary, although the state of his heart made the result precarious. When the anaesthetic was given he said good-bye, expecting not to survive. His composure was like that of a man before a long journey to a far but well-known country, which he was not unwilling to undertake, although anxiety for his family held him back. The operation removed the acute cause of the disease (*ileus*), and it seemed that he was to be given back to us. But the heart was too weak for the effort; and on Sunday, July 12th, repeated attacks made it plain that the end was near. To those who stood by his bed his death was the crowning seal of his life. He was himself the consoler. He thanked the doctors and nurses for their care. He gave thanks to God that he had been allowed, unworthy as he was, to serve as

priest in the Church of Sweden. He spoke of these lectures as ready for print, and determined what their title should be: 'There is a living God,' he said, 'I can prove it by the history of religions.' He read familiar verses from the Swedish hymn-book. At his request, all joined in 'Our Father', and he gave his hand to all in the room. His last whispered words to his wife, as far as they were at all audible, were: 'Anna, eternity.' At 6.40 p.m. he passed away. On July 18th he was laid to his rest in his cathedral, in the presence of the royal family, representatives of foreign Churches and nations, and a mourning people. According to his instructions these words were read at the grave, and are now inscribed on the stone: 'When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.'

That within half a year of his death a whole literature had sprung up around his person is only one of the signs that he had made an extraordinary impression on his contemporaries. It is easy to point to some of the reasons. His personal equipment combined gifts that are very rarely granted to one man. In him the scholar's sense of exactness was joined to a creative imagination and a strongly artistic temperament. An impulsiveness that gave to him an astonishing appearance of youthfulness even on the threshold of old age, went hand in hand with a marvellously tenacious will, and a self-control that could conceal bodily and mental pain in order to transmit to others a joyous vital strength. Under what seemed to be a playful optimism that keenly enjoyed the small humorous absurdities which he came across, was hidden a deep sense of the tragedy of life. The harmonizing principle that made an organic whole out of this bewildering richness was his Christian faith. His conviction of the forgiveness of sins and of the essential given-ness of life made him a great giver, and gave a deep inner meaning to that overpowering, victorious generosity, that sun-like radiancy which remains to those who loved him as the dominant impression of all.

Any estimate which is now given is necessarily subjective. The time will come in due course for a critical appreciation

of the man and his work. But the experience of the past teaches us that not the least important part of the history of a great and saintly man is that which is written in the hearts of those who loved him and to whom he revealed something of the glory of the living God.

LUND, SWEDEN

I

TRAINING AND INSPIRATION IN PRIMITIVE RELIGION

I

THE subjects discussed in these lectures will be:

1. The difference existing among various phenomena appertaining to the spiritual and religious experience of man.
2. The difference between human beings of varying temperament and disposition.
3. Consequently also a relative difference between various types of personal religion.

Can one speak of personal religion among primitive people? Is not religion there entirely the concern of the tribe?

No; religion must exist and rise up in the soul of man prior to finding expression in his words and deeds, customs and institutions. It must be found in the individual before it becomes the concern of the community. As a natural reaction against earlier exaggeration of the feelings and opinions of the individual, religious research learned a generation ago to appreciate the importance of the community with regard to worship and sacred teaching. Religion meets us everywhere as a sacral institution. It appertains to the ordered life of society. But religion is also everywhere very old. We were not present when it arose. However, a beginning is inconceivable which does not issue from the reaction of the individual to things, events, and existence. A science which makes the community *all*, ignoring the individual, may seem to the sober judgement of a later time just as mythological and fantastic as primitive thought. Two peculiar conceptions have had a misleading attraction.

(a) Religion has been conceived as an anonymous mass-product. Its beginning, to be sure, was anonymous; but a mass as such is never creative. It is composed of individuals. The forest cannot come into being, unless the separate trees shoot and grow. Taboo rules, commandments enjoining holiness, fear of the powers and communion with them are

not, in some incomprehensible way, produced by the mass or the community. Take any mass-movement whatever, either in history or in our own time. Closer examination reveals that it had its origin in an individual or in individuals. The fire was kindled in a soul or in several souls, until the flames spread all around. The idea that the mass or community is the original subject of religion belongs to that modern scientific mythology which is in process of disappearing. We must condescend to go to the individual.

(b) Another popular but misty scientific myth must also be dispelled. When Mannhardt discovered the vegetation demons and their significance he could scarcely have imagined their brilliant career. The old names and heroes of tradition were rapidly turned into vegetation demons. Their names and enterprises were made to support this view. I have honestly endeavoured to construct a concrete picture of that ancient time when our planet was mainly peopled by vegetation demons, sun and moon gods, and other mythical beings. One day in 1898 Peppé found on a hill at Piprava, west of Nepal, remains of the cremated body of the great Buddha. The acute intelligence of Axel Persson¹ deciphers on a mug from about 1500 B.C. or later, found in the old palace at Thebes, the words 'Kadmos, ruler of Thebes'. Thus, even in prehistoric times, we have to reckon with men, yes, with important individuals. If we want to study the essence and elementary forms of religion, we must study the soul-life of the individual.

II

'The best of life is intoxication.' When poor man in far-back primitive times discovered intoxicating beverages he thought, like Lord Byron, that the best of life is intoxication. It enhanced the feeling of self and the feeling of life. It lifted him into a bigger, more joyful, and brighter world. The body was able to jump and dance. The eyes shone. The mouth found cause to shout and laugh. If the beverage was taken in abundance, one passed outside consciousness, perhaps into strange dreams. The intoxicating beverage

¹ A. W. Persson, *Schrift und Sprache in Alt-Kreta*, p. 28 sq.

became sacred. Together with tobacco and dancing, it became the well-tried means whereby medicine-men and shamans got into a state of ecstasy. To this very day Tartars and Kalmucks make themselves intoxicated with fermented mare's milk which is deemed to impart immortality. The Seminoles drank a kind of strong tea, the so-called 'black drink', which brought on a state of excitement. The intoxicating drink of the ancient Mexicans was called *pulke*. Unpermitted drinking of *pulke* involved capital punishment. Only at the festival of the fire-god Xiuhtecutli was it the custom for all to get drunk, big and small, men and women, down to the very sucklings.

The vital power of the gods, like that of all beings, comes from food. If only one could find the food and drink of the gods! A Chinese emperor, in the year 217 B.C., sent out a fleet to bring life-beverages from the Gold Islands. Honey was deemed to possess power against disease and danger. In solid form it was ambrosia, literally immortality food, in liquid form, nectar. The gods derived their immortality from such nourishment. The Bacchantes of Euripides call the honey the nectar of the bees. Honey dropped from their thyrsus staffs. During their raptures they obtained milk and honey from the rivers. Milk and honey are the bliss of the earth, as was known to both Greeks and Jews. They are the food of the gods. The infant Zeus was nourished on them in Crete. Paradise, the lost and the expected, the land of promise, is flowing with milk and honey. The celestial power of honey still recurs in the ancient Christian Church. In a Latin revision of the early Christian writing, 'the teaching of the twelve apostles', Usener has demonstrated the custom of giving honey to the newly-baptized. The high fame of honeymeade among the ancient Norsemen has long been known. You can get it still to-day in Old Upsala.

India also knew the intoxicating honey-drink, *madhu*. In India and Iran the sacred beverage of worship, enjoyed as a sacrament, is another, called *soma*, *haoma*. The juice was pressed out of a plant which grew on the mountains in the present Afghanistan, or farther north. Some of the Sake

people, in the present Turkestan, were called in ancient times 'haoma preparers'. To this very day the soma is employed in the Brahmanic sacrifice and the haoma by the Mobeds of the Parsces in Bombay. It is uncertain whether the plant is the same as the ancient one. Certain it is that the acrid drops from the plant which has been crushed in the sacred mortar, mixed with milk and water, and consumed by the priest during the service, would not yield even the mildest intoxication. Not so in ancient times. Indra, the divine pugilist and champion drinker of the Rigveda religion, felt uncontrollable longing for the delightful soma, and drained whole tubs of it before he got his fill, and grew blissful and boastful. 'Flow, O Soma, for Indra', was the prayer.

The priests had to be content with less. The experience once made of the bliss of intoxication remained through the ages as a doctrine and an article of faith. 'Soma gives to the bards strength and beauty: clad in this beauty they go to immortality.'¹ We hear the emotion stirred up by the mild intoxication: 'We have drunk the soma, we have become immortal, we have come to the light, we have attained to the gods. What can malice now do unto us? How can the enmity of a mortal harm us, the immortal?'²

Soma, the divine beverage which bestows immortality upon gods and men, was called in India 'immortality', *amṛta*, while the more moderate Iranians employed Immortality as the name of an archangel who, with his twin genius, Soundness, Health, ruled over the realms of the plants and the waters. The celestial haoma will, in the fullness of time, form part of that life-giving beverage which will remove death for ever. Even in this life the sacred sacrificial drink keeps death away and guards against all danger. The priest is aware of its blessed power. It is said in the Haoma hymn:

Hail to haoma. 'Tis he who gives
The poor man feelings like the great,
And a mind like the richest of all.
Hail to haoma. 'Tis he who gives
The poor man feelings just as great
As if he stood at the longed-for goal.³

¹ Rigveda, ix. 99. 4.

² Ibid., viii. 48. 3.

³ Yasna 14.

The sacred intoxicating drink was a 'life-water'—even now brandy is called *eau-de-vie* in France.

Even after alcohol as an intoxicant had lost significance for the cult, wine played a part in the realm of mysticism. When mysticism is not using the linguistic terms of the moral and spiritual life but seeks to render the glow and heat of extraordinary experiences, it easily falls into the terminology either of sensual love or of vinous intoxication. The former has occurred not only with inconceivable and misleading luxuriance in Hinduism, but also, in the Song of Solomon [connected with a glowing profane love-song], in Bernard of Clairvaux, and in the form of piety which traces back to him. The latter, the language of the inebriated concerning the ineffable, has been employed particularly in Persian Sufism. Eros has also contributed tones of sweetness, yearning, and passion to the enchanting poetry which Persian mysticism has given to the world. 'The friend', 'the beloved' is the current name for the ineffable. The intoxication of wine and love go hand in hand. Nowhere else has erotic language become a means of expressing piety in such a way as in the raptures of the Sufis.

Sufism in Persia had borrowed from several quarters, among others from Neoplatonism. But the chaste Platonic paleness is changed by the Sufis to the flush of intoxication. 'Thy body is the beaker, thy spirit is the wine: drink wine morning and evening.' But what Spinoza experienced and called 'the intoxication of God' is described most intensely by Hafiz, the Sufi poet: 'Stain the prayer-mat with wine when bidden by the Magus, the priest.' Hafiz sings: 'All the world is his wine-house. The heart in every atom is his beaker. The mind is inebriated, the angels are inebriated, the soul is inebriated, the air is inebriated, the earth is inebriated, and heaven is inebriated.'

Equilibrium in the faculties of man, according to the adherents of Bajezid, makes the thickest veil that can come between God and the soul. Only intoxication, *sukr*, is able to abolish the equilibrium, remove the hindrance from the mind of the sober, and retain the faculties which are able to embrace the divine and which are not subject to corruption.

The philosopher Ibn Sina, Avicenna (d. 1037) would reserve the noble wine for the wise. 'Is it the fault of the wine that it raises us to heaven—but casts the drunken fool out into the darkness?'

The greatest Sufi poets, Fariduddin Attar (d. 1230) and Jalal uddin Rumi (d. 1273), portray the luxuriance of vinous mysticism. Attar says: 'I drink wine but blame me not, I am a slave to wine and love.' He is on the other side, in the bliss of the enjoyment of God. Rumi enumerates the names of honour of the Sufis; one is 'God's drunken one'.

I imagine that we shall have to agree with the answer made by the steward to the Caliph Omar, who would dismiss him because he had praised wine and mirth in his poems. 'By Allah, O Prince of the believers, I have never done anything of that of which my poems speak. But I am a poet with abundance of words and them I use as poets are wont.' We may be sure that more wine ran through the stanzas of the Sufis than down their throats.

Not all sensuous mysticism is so poetical and, relatively, so honourable. In the Sakti sects of Bengal the customs are coarser. I will not describe the ritual at their mystery celebrations, which is kept carefully secret and surrounded with the nimbus of holiness.

Intoxicants are neither the most important nor the most universal means of attaining a superhuman religious state. I have mentioned them here because their employment plainly demonstrated the primitive view of religion and communion with the powers as *another existence*, unlike ordinary life, something 'wholly other', as the modern German theologians like to say.

More characteristic means are: incense, venomous herbs, tobacco, fasting, flagellation, self-torture, vigils and other similar means which can be summarized under the term asceticism, 'exercise'.

'Asceticism, or rather *ascesis*, means simply a course of training, as men train for a race. For example, Aristotle says that the Spartans had an admirable military training which procured for them success in war; but after their victories they always

failed, "because they had never practised any other kind of *ascesis* more important than military science".¹

III

Asceticism has played an incalculable part in the piety and culture of East and West. In these lectures, our attention will be chiefly occupied with asceticism in India. But we do not forget that it has a continuous history also in ancient Greece from Homer's barefooted priests in Dodona to the ascetic schools in the last centuries B.C.

'In truth asceticism has a continuous history within Hellenism. Even Homer knows of the priests of chilly Dodona, the Selli, whose bare feet are unwashed, and who sleep on the ground. This is probably not, as Wilamowitz-Möllendorf thinks, a description of savage life, but of an ascetic school of prophets. For the fast-days which introduced the Thesmophoria were observed by the Athenian matrons in the same way; they went unshod and sat on the bare earth; and we may compare the Nudipedalia, ordered by the Romans in time of dearth and mentioned by Petronius and Tertullian. Prophets and prophetesses fasted at Miletus, Colophon, and other places.'²

'The worship of Dionysus Zagreus in Thrace was accompanied by ascetic practices before Pythagoras. Vegetarianism, which has always played an important part in the ascetic life, was obligatory on all Pythagoreans; but in this school there was another motive besides the desire to mortify the flesh. Those who believe in the transmigration of souls into the bodies of animals must regard flesh-eating as little better than cannibalism. The Pythagorean and the Orphic rules of life were well known throughout antiquity, and were probably obeyed by large numbers. The rule of continence was far less strict than in the Catholic "religious" life; but Empedocles, according to Hippolytus, advised abstinence from marriage and procreation, and the tendency to regard celibacy as part of the "philosophic life" increased steadily. The Cynic Antisthenes is quoted by Clement of Alexandria as having expressed a wish to "shoot Aphrodite, who has ruined so many virtuous women". But the asceticism of the early Cynics and of some Stoics was based not on self-devotion and spirituality but on the desire for independence, and often took repulsive forms.'³

¹ W. R. Inge, *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems*, p. 90.

² W. R. Inge, *The Church in the World*, p. 127.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

Asceticism has taken revolting forms, both among primitive races and on the higher levels of religion. But we agree with the Dean of St. Paul's that 'some form of voluntary discipline is necessary for everybody.—"Abusus non tollit usum."'¹

IV

Man covets supernatural experience. Even at the primitive stage he divines what was inscribed on gold plates deposited in South Italian graves, five or six centuries before Christ, for the service of the dead in the other world: 'I am a child of the earth and the star-spangled heaven.' Man is the meeting-place of two worlds and, however closely his mind and labour may be tied to the visible world, he has never forgotten his lofty destiny.

Man 'has been called by utilitarian philosophers a tool-making animal—the highest praise they knew how to bestow. More surely is he a vision-making animal. Or, as Aristotle, and after him St. Thomas Aquinas, suggest, a contemplative animal, since "this act alone is proper to him, and is in no way shared by any other being in this world".'²

To the other, the mysterious, we might say, the supernatural existence, bringing communion with the Power and the powers, primitive man gains access by an initiation. The steps may be in part outward and corporal, in part of a more spiritual nature.

Once in their lives, either in childhood or at the age of puberty, all male children are removed from their homes and put into a peculiar state by means of fasting, narcotics, and painful operations. When the boys return, they are different beings. They have undergone that which is called, not by the Aryans of India alone, a new birth which makes them 'twice born'. Bastian quotes the remark of a native of Bamba in West Africa, south of the Congo: 'In the country of Bamba everyone must once have died.'³

Carl Meinhof says:

'Mrs. Routledge found a most remarkable custom among the Kikuyu in East Africa. They call it the *second birth*. By a repetition

¹ W. R. Inge, *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems*, p. 135.

² Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 16 sq.

³ Ad. Bastian, *Ein Besuch in San Salvador*, pp. 82, 86.

of the ceremonies which take place at birth, the child is admitted to the religious and political rights of its people. An offering is presented, the mother's hair is cut, the hut is tidied and ablutions are performed—exactly as when a child is born. The origin of the custom is not clear, only that it is connected with the consecrations occurring everywhere in Africa at the *commencement of a new development*.

'These consecration ceremonies vary in different tribes, as also for boys and girls, but they have certain common features. They are accompanied by several kinds of painful operations such as knocking out the teeth, circumcision, the tattooing or branding of various tribal signs. In many tribes the boys are beaten and handled in the most cruel way, and should any one make the attempt to escape, it may cost him his life. It is intended to be a test of the sturdiness of the young folk and it is deemed shameful for anyone to show cowardice.'¹

Hutton Webster writes:

'In some parts of Africa, and particularly in the Congo region, the development of fetishism and of a class of fetish-doctors has resulted in transferring the initiation ceremonies to these officials. Under their supervision the boys are secluded in the forest, where they are circumcised and are given the usual course of instruction. Sometimes one fetish-doctor is in charge; more frequently there are a number of fetish-doctors who, with their assistants, form an organization of their own. In the Nkimba, an institution which has wide range among the Lower Congo tribes, initiatory rites are in charge of the Nganga, or fetish-man, who lives with his assistants in an enclosure near each village.'²

Sir James Frazer, with marvellous industry, has collected examples from all parts and all ages of the world.

'Each primitive Indian has his guardian *manitou*, to whom he looks for counsel, guidance and protection. At the age of fourteen or fifteen, the Indian boy blackens his face, retires to some solitary place, and remains for days without food. Superstitious expectance and the exhaustion of abstinence rarely fail of their results. His sleep is haunted by visions, and the form which first or most often appears is that of his guardian *manitou*—a beast, a bird, a fish, a serpent, or some other object, animate or inanimate.'³

¹ C. Meinhof, *Afrikanische Religionen*, p. 94.

² Hutton Webster, *Primitive Secret Societies*, p. 173.

³ Sir J. G. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, iii, p. 373.

The guidance and influence of the spirits are important.

'From such practices as the Nkimba and the Ndembo illustrate, it is an easy step to the conversion of the puberty institution into a seminary for the training of fetish-doctors or shamans. Such a step seems to have been taken among the Kaffirs, where the *Isintonga*, or fetish-doctors, who are supposed to have intimate relations with the *Imisholugu*, or spirits of the dead, form a special caste, the secrets of which are revealed only to those who undergo a long initiation. The candidates must first exhibit by their possession of hallucinations the unmistakable influence of the *Imisholugu*, after which their initiation by the usual secret rites occurs.'¹

Fasting and other ascetic methods are diligently employed.

'In the first place, let it be noted, that in the majority of cases there is either a prolonged fast with abstention from drink or at least a condition of unusual nervous strain. Under these abnormal circumstances, physiological and psychological, the critical sense may well fall into abeyance, leaving the field clear for dream fantasies. The phenomenon involved is, in other words, generically that of a hallucination. Its particular character is moulded by a variety of causes.'²

'When Medicine-crow was a young man, he fasted for four days, offered a finger joint to the Sun, and prayed for horses. A young man and a young woman suddenly came towards him, each holding a hoop with feathers in one hand and a hoop with strawberries in the other. The woman said, "We have come here to let him hear something." While Medicine-crow was wondering what she had in mind, her companion went to the other side of the ridge and soon reappeared, driving a herd of horses. The woman followed suit, also returning with horses. Both wore crowns of a certain kind. One of them said: "I have shown you all these horses. I am the sacred Tobacco. I want you to join the Tobacco society with these crowns." The young woman told him not to allow guns at the tobacco planting.

'As a result of this experience Medicine-crow not only came to own a great many horses but also founded a new chapter of the great ceremonial organization known as the Tobacco society, making all his followers wear such crowns as had been revealed to him and forbidding the use of firearms in connection with the ritual.'³

¹ Hutton Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

² R. H. Lowie, *Primitive Religion*, p. 11.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Are all susceptible to the method? Can all see visions? Answers vary. They are not alone concerned with the initiation of the young, but still more with the initiation to secret societies and especially with the initiation to the office of medicine-man, shaman, priest, or wizard. At Mabulag, Torres Straits, it seemed to Haddon that anybody can be trained even if very few are willing to undergo the abominable ascetic rites.¹

Robert Lowie does not believe in the omnipotence of the method.

'The powerful shamans, then, were not official representatives of religion acting on behalf of the whole community, but fortunate visionaries who, with small groups of followers, formed diminutive congregational units independent of one another, though tied together by an unformulated common world-view.'²

The observations of others corroborate his opinion.

'It may happen that the children of a shaman, in spite of all their efforts, cannot get to see a single spirit, while others even against their will are bound to become shamans, as the spirits never leave them in peace.'³

Here we come to the point to notice: according to primitive opinion, communion with the powers and a supernatural state of mind cannot be attained by any human exertion or instruction, but only by inborn talent or the interference of a divinity.

The Russian scholar D. Bansarow relates that among the Mongols a person does not become a true shaman by exercises, but is born with that aptitude. Even as a child he displays anxiety, melancholy, and other strange traits. Later he is initiated into the secret arts.

Exercises alone do not suffice. There must be a natural or, rather, supernatural disposition.

Personal qualifications and ascetic discipline are both needed and presuppose one another. Concerning this Provost Norenus says of the Zulus:

The vocation comes from Amadhlozi, the spirits, and manifests itself by certain signs; the one who is called feels stitches and pains

¹ *The Expedition to Torres Straits*, v, p. 321.

² R. H. Lowie, *Primitive Religion*, p. 17.

³ G. Landtman, *The Origin of Priesthood*, p. 90.

in the sides and shoulders, has troubled sleep, grows weak, has dreams, becomes a 'house of dreams'. Medicines are employed and offerings are made to the dead. If this does not avail, it means that the spirits are calling. The family takes counsel. It is dangerous to hold aloof, help is needed from a mighty inyanga. If the youth is going to be a priest, he has a long apprenticeship before him. The word *Ukwetwasa*, 'appear in new shape', properly speaking, indicates the time when he is ready, but is also used of the whole time of preparation. His relatives now make offerings for him. He is changed, eats but little and only certain kinds of food. He fasts and castigates himself. 'A satisfied body cannot see into what is hidden.' He lives by himself. He rushes into pools of water to capture *umnyama*, a kind of mystic animal which has something to do with the rainbow. He may not wash himself, his hair grows, he gesticulates, dances, howls, falls into lethargy, creeps on all fours and imitates animals.

Finally it is revealed to him in a dream that he must visit an old *izanusu* with whom he stays several years, has to pay a number of cattle and offers sacrifices. He learns the secret arts and undergoes purification. All that is dark within him is removed by the black magical drink. It has a laxative effect. Then the white magical beverage is drunk which aids the inner sight.

When he is ready, he goes home and sings 'the song of initiation' as a proof of his inspiration. He gives public proof of his skill at a place where they do not believe in him. There they hide articles which he has to discover. He makes denunciatory speeches and receives gifts. And now his work begins.

Izanusi, the priests, are go-betweens for spirits and men and they may be women. They form a high caste, a priestly rank. The most common name, *Izinyanga*, denotes people who have secret powers and knowledge at their disposal. So they call a person who is quite at home in some matter. *Izanusi* are able to search the unknown. *Abangoma* likewise, or they are sacrificing priests. *Amabuda* have visions and revelations from the spirit world, behave queerly, and have a more contemptuous name. *Buda* denotes one who is queer.

Supernatural power is also exercised by quite another class of men, viz. the wizards, *abatakati*. *Takata* means to influence, to put a spell upon. The accusation of being such a one is the worst that can be said of any one. Formerly, he was killed. If somebody meets with success, envy whispers that he is a wizard. Witchcraft is forbidden but is practised in secret. *Abatakati*

have terrible power. Frequently they are fallen Izanusi. They seek the succour of evil, demonic powers. They can assume the shape of animals: baboon, wolf, or owl. They can send grasshoppers and other animals, they bind magic knots and bewitch various objects. They make use of herbs, insects, manure, human flesh, and human fat. The difference between them and Izanusi is that the latter help man and arrange communication with the spirits of the dead. Abatakati hurt and have dealings with evil powers.¹

What is noteworthy here is that the spirits can reveal themselves and call a man in the absence of any steps on his part.

'Klamroth has well stated the difference among the Saramo, the one is called by the spirit, abducted, and thus violently, compelled by demonic powers to enter upon his office. Of course, he enjoys high respect, for it is a demon that is working within him. In this case higher powers are at work than in a simple sorcerer. The other one, called by Klamroth the initiated, has learned magic, paid for it, and is then installed in his office. His reputation is not equal to that of the first, but will be in proportion to his performances.'²

Landtman gives instances from different quarters.

'As the faculty of conversing with the gods is so very generally confined to the priests, other people being excluded from communion with the spirit-world, it is an easy step to the conclusion that the gods have themselves selected their representatives among mankind. In conformity with notions of this sort, many peoples believe that the gods confer divine powers upon certain men and that the only way in which a person can become a priest is through being chosen by the gods.

'The shamans of the Aleuts said that it was not they who called up the spirits, but that, on the contrary, the spirits themselves chose their attendants. Among the Thlinkets, an aspirant to shamanhood has to remain in solitude till one of the spirits sends to him a river-otter, from the tongue of which he obtains the secrets required. The Eskimo Angakoks, also, were supposed to be endowed by the god with supernatural power when dwelling alone in solitary places. After having been invoked for some time, *Tornarsuk*, or the highest god, appeared and provided the novice with a *Tornak*, i.e. a helping or guardian spirit. The gift

¹ Cf. *Tillkomme Ditt Rike*, 1912, pp. 34 sqq.

² Carl Meinhof, op. cit., pp. 57-8.

of a seer or prophet is among the Ojebway Indians believed to be given by the Thunder-god, and then only at long intervals and to a chosen few.¹

The secret is, according to Bastian, that the fetish likes that person. But the choice of the spirit can be facilitated and controlled by special measures.

'When we read that the Munda Kolhs by various superstitious procedures find out the proper Pahan, or priest, to perform their sacrifices—for instance, by watching a frightened bull which stops before a certain house—we must presume that the god was supposed to make his will known by those signs. The natives of the Gold Coast supply an instance of the priest being chosen in a direct way by the god. Mr. Bell relates that when an additional priest is wanted in a village, a general meeting of the inhabitants takes place, and a certain number of young men and women are made to stand in a circle. The fetish-priest, after certain weird and gruesome ceremonies, places on the head of each candidate a bundle of herbs and leaves. "While this proceeding", the author tells us, "may have no effect on the majority, it happens, in most cases, that one or more of the youths and girls fall straightway into a sort of fit and appear to be possessed by some strange influence. This is taken as a sign that the Fetish has spoken, and that the deity has fixed on the person or persons so affected for his service."'²

'If it happened that a Sioux saw the god of Thunder, or some other mysterious object, he was after some further trial made a member of the order of thunder shamans and was entitled to wear their peculiar robe.'³

If an Indian does not himself possess *orenda*, he acquires it by rites and words or claims the power of another body or being, a plant or tree, a rock or mountain, a beast or bird, water, &c.⁴

'The Songish of the southern end of Vancouver, also had two sorts of shamans. Of these the higher, called the *squṇā'am*, acquired his power in the usual way by intercourse with supernatural beings, while the *si'oua*, who was usually a woman, received her knowledge from another *si'oua*. . . .

'Mohave shamans usually receive their powers directly from

¹ G. Landtman, op. cit., p. 94.

² Ibid., p. 99.

³ Ibid., p. 90.

⁴ J. N. B. Hewitt, *Orenda and a Definition of Religion*, pp. 33-46.

Mastambo, the chief deity, and acquire them by dreaming rather than the more usual methods of fasting, isolation, petition, &c. Dixon records this latter feature also among the Shasta. . . .

'One who had not had a shaman for a parent had to go into the mountains to a place where some spirit was supposed to reside, fast, and go through certain ceremonies, and when a shaman desired to obtain more powerful helpers than those he possessed, he did the same. Shamans in this region always carried cocoon rattles.'¹

When extraordinary talents occur, they are deemed to be the gift of God.

(a) Outward signs demonstrate the presence of the powers; perhaps, a strange appearance.

'Sometimes people believe it possible to judge from mere outward signs that certain persons possess mysterious powers and are able to act as sorcerers or priests. So, among the Ojebway Indians, "many receive the name of witches without making any pretension to the art, merely because they are deformed or ill-looking". All esteemed witches or wizards among these Indians are, as a rule, "remarkably wicked, of a ragged appearance and forbidding countenance". Mr. Reade states that in Congo "all dwarfs and albinos are elevated to a priesthood". There is little doubt that the awe with which this class of men is generally regarded, in consequence of their outward appearance, also accounts for the belief that they are endowed with secret powers.'²

The candidate's peculiar behaviour is often believed to denote divine influence.

'The men undergo a three years' novitiate in order to become priests, at the end of which each candidate has to prove that God accepts him and finds him worthy of inspiration. Escorted by a party of priests he goes to a shrine and seats himself on a stool, that belongs to the deity. The priests then anoint his head with a mystic decoction and invoke the god in a long and wild chorus. During this singing the youth, if he is acceptable to the deity, trembles violently, simulates convulsions, foams at the mouth, and dances in a frenzied style, sometimes for more than an hour. This is the proof that the god has taken possession of him. After that he has to remain in a temple without speaking for seven days and nights. At the end of that time, he is brought out, a

¹ *Handbook of American Indians*, ii, pp. 522-3.

² G. Landtman, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

priest opens his mouth to show that he may now use his tongue, a new name is given him, and he is fully ordained.¹

(b) But the choice of the powers is not manifested by outward signs alone, but also by high intelligence and capacity.

'Among the Congo tribes, a man who distinguishes himself by reason of his superior mental capacity, or by virtue of his individual courage and prowess . . . is forthwith regarded as one favoured by the spirits. Availing himself of the opportunity afforded by such a distinction, he constitutes himself a professional N'ganga N'Kissi (charm-doctor), and professes to be endowed with the power of communication with the spirits.'²

Mana among the races of the South Seas and *orenda* among the Indians of North America are manifested in the physical and spiritual qualifications of a person. But they are traced to the spirits. Raphael Karsten has pointed out that this *mana*, this power, cannot be regarded simply as impersonal stuff scattered about the world, but that it is frequently, perhaps usually, to be traced to personal spirit-powers. The comparison with electricity is instructive. But I have more than once had reason to point out that these expressions, *mana*, *orenda*, power, &c., denote a quality and a supernatural fellowship, rather than a kind of impersonal fluid. In the Australian tribes the medicine-men get their strength from Bajamee and other high beings known to the mysteries.³ An ordinary sign of such supernatural benediction or possession is the power of falling into ecstacy or trance.

(c) The shamanism can also be inherited, as among the Lithuanians.

'As a rule, the arts of witchcraft are inherited and handed down in the family from father to son, from mother to daughter, the transfer taking place in the last moments of the earthly life of the wizard. I have not been able to obtain accurate information as to what is the procedure when this happens, nor whether a wizard in whose practice, from the standpoint of religious morality, objectionable things prevail, and who will not communicate his knowledge, has a very hard death-struggle, as the neighbours of the Lithuanians in the East believe.'⁴

¹ A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, pp. 142-3.

² G. Landtman, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

³ A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 405.

⁴ V. J. Mansikka, *Litauische Zaubersprüche*, p. 25.

Similar observations have been made among American Indians, and elsewhere.

'The Maidu seem to have presented considerable variations within one small area. In some sections heredity played little part in determining who should become a shaman, but in the N.E. part of the Maidu country all of a shaman's children were obliged to take up his profession or the spirits would kill them.'

I quote Landtman again.

'Of other peoples we learn that the priesthood is hereditary, but that the aspirants must, in addition, be qualified by certain necessary endowments. Among the Thlinkets the profession of a shaman is almost always hereditary, being transmitted with all its apparatus to the son or grandson of the shaman. But not everybody who feels so inclined may assume that vocation even though he be the descendant of a shaman, as only those are qualified who can converse with the spirits.'

(d) Among the necessary measures we have mentioned castigation, fasting, operations, instruction, i.e. a course either of outward or more spiritual nature.

Exercises are regarded as a method 1. of gaining supernatural power, or 2. of getting into contact with spirits or gods, or most likely, perhaps, 3. of gaining power by contact with the gods. We are reminded, *mutatis mutandis*, of Ritschl's triangle: Man, by trust in God, shall have dominion over the world.³

To be quite correct we must say that both are needed, natural equipment or the calling of the god and a *special* training. This rule holds good for the entire history of religion.

'There are three views as to the causal explanation which can be traced throughout the history of the higher religions—that the experience is exclusively the work of God, that it is due to co-operation between man and God, and that in it man works out his own salvation.'

¹ *Handbook of American Indians*, ii, p. 522. ² G. Landtman, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

³ Ascetic exercises remain in religion, being, perchance, interpreted in another way as merit or sacrifice. Self-torture at a burial was regarded by Varro as a sacrifice (E. Aust, *Die Religion der Römer*, p. 228).

⁴ W. P. Paterson, *The Nature of Religion*, p. 50.

What Paterson here says in his Gifford lectures of higher religion is discerned even in primitive.

Judging from the practice and statements of those concerned, one might be tempted to make the difference between those who have been called by spirits and those who have procured power by measures of their own, coincide with the difference between religion and magic. In the former case it is man who submits to the deity and obeys it. In the latter man makes himself lord of the powers and employs them for his own purposes. Such a distinction between divine endowment and psychological training can be justified to a certain degree. It may also happen that the wizard exercises his power without having recourse to supernatural powers.

According to Sir Alfred Lyall a wizard 'is one who professes to work marvels, not through the aid and counsel of the supernatural beings in whom he believes as much as the rest, but by certain occult faculties and devices which he conceives himself to possess'.¹ 'The priest is held in reverence as the ambassador of a power on which it is hopeless to make war.'²

A critic of Mary Kingsley in the *Edinburgh Review* distinguished between serving the powers as a priest and using them by means of magic. Frazer has devoted much attention to this problem. The matter is complicated. In accordance with the views of Robertson Smith, Jevons writes:

'Magic is a direct relapse into the state of things in which man found himself when he was surrounded by supernatural beings, none of which was bound to him by any stated relations, but all were uncertain, capricious and caused in him unreasoning terror. This reign of terror magic tends to re-establish, and does re-establish wherever the belief in magic prevails. The first step towards man's escape from it was the confidence, given to him by his alliance with the clan-god, that his fortunes and his destiny were no longer at the mercy of capricious powers, but in the hands of a being who was friendly to him and was actuated by intelligible and reasonable motives. Magic, therefore—the dealing with spiritual beings other than the gods of the community—is in two ways the negation of religion, and necessarily incurs its

¹ A. Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, i. 106-7.

² Landtman, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

hostility. First, the desertion of a worshipper is offensive ingratitude to the clan-god, who accordingly may withdraw his protection from the community, which is collectively responsible (as in the blood-feud) for the acts of any of its members. Next, the fundamental principle of religion—belief in the wisdom and goodness of God—is violated by the belief in magic, by the idea that a good man can come to harm, or that a bad man is allowed to injure him.¹

‘From the fallacy of magic man was delivered by religion; and there are reasons, I submit, for believing that it was by the same aid he escaped from the irrational restrictions of Taboo.’²

The relation between Religion and Magic is a very complicated problem which I have treated in a special supplement.³

Communion with superhuman powers occurs both in religion and magic. But for magic it is not indispensable. For religion communion with powers or gods is essential. It is attained, as we have seen, in various ways.

F. R. Lehmann⁴ distinguishes in the Polynesians three elementary psychical forms: ‘One form exhibited the connexion with the supernatural world by means of divine descent (*ariki*), the second by means of the rite (*tohunga*) and the third by means of mystical absorption (*taula*).’

(e) In any case we must admit the serious element in primitive religious views.

‘Just as in the conversion stories familiar to our culture, a sharp cleavage is made to divide the convert’s sinful existence before his regeneration from his virtuous mode of life when reborn, so the Crow loves to contrast his destitute condition or lack of distinction before his revelation with the material benefits or exalted position that followed. Says One-blue-bead: “When I was a boy, I was poor. I saw war parties come back with leaders in front and having a procession. I used to envy them and made up my mind to fast and become like them. When I saw the vision I got what I had longed for . . . I killed eight enemies.”’⁵

The visionary’s ‘whole conduct bears the stamp of sincerity. He gashes and disfigures himself to earn the coveted revelation, yet confesses his disappointment and tries again. He observes with mincing care the regulations laid down by his monitor,

¹ F. B. Jevons, *An Introduction to the History of Religion*, p. 177.

² *Ibid.*, p. 91.

³ *Vide*, p. 32.

⁴ F. R. Lehmann, *Die polynesischen Tabusitten*, p. 134.

⁵ Lowie, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

however disturbing to his personal comfort. Even in recent times he will abstain from some delicacy in order to maintain a quite irrational taboo imposed at the time of his fast. He will unwrap the memento of his sacred experience with every sign of profound emotion and sentimental regard. He will recount the happenings not merely to impress a crowd of gaping outsiders but in the bosom of his family. His essential truthfulness is beyond cavil. As a half-sophisticated convert to Catholicism once told me, "When you listen to the old men telling their experiences, you have just *got* to believe them!"¹

Who is it who calls the man to become a man of religion? Or what is it that imparts to him supernatural power?

A few words are needed about the Divine. The Divine is apprehended by man in different manners. It cannot from the beginning be called divine. Neither is supernatural the right word. Because such a distinction between what belongs to Nature and what is metaphysical lying behind or above Nature, or constituting the very Real in Nature, does not belong to the conception of primitive man. In the beginning, as far as we can speak of beginnings, we must perhaps be contented with the conception of what is unusual, astonishing, frightening, powerful, more than human, interrupting the ordinary course of events.

It is evident, that man could not (1) give to such phenomena a place apart, nor (2) surround them with taboo rules if man had not *a priori* in himself a disposition for the supernatural, an inner kinship with a superhuman reality which is dimly reflected in the mind of man, in his customs and life.

1. The attentive student of religion has for long observed, that the taboo, sacred, holy, is the fundamental idea of religion. I have formulated the essence of personal piety in a sentence, which, boldly enough, is meant to tell what religion is throughout its whole history, from those inconspicuous and few Australians—who, owing to excellent and searching descriptions of English and German missionaries and scholars, have become a kind of paradigm of religion and sacred rites, and, *mirabile dictu*, without knowing it themselves, are invited to teach Western science and culture what is

¹ Lowie, op. cit., p. 10.

meant by religion¹—up to Nichiren and St. Francis, Ramanuja and Al Ghazali, Martin Luther, Pascal, and John Bunyan. My definition runs: The pious or religious man is one to whom something is holy.

The intercourse with beings or things who are Mana (mighty), Taboo (especially marked in difference from the ordinary events or beings or things), Noa (sacred, dangerous, and valuable), has created an abundance of ceremonies, rules, societies, and organisations, offices and evaluations, which vary infinitely but exhibit the same fundamental character although they lack any visible historic connexion.

2. These sacred powers appear also in analogy with the human will as spirits, demons, superhuman beings, gods. Souls are to be found in man and other beings, and they continue their activity after death, some amongst them become mightier after death than before. In nature, divinities appear in a thousand ways: one can observe them; they *live* in heaven, sun, moon, stars, thunder, rain, trees, mountains, wells; or they *are* heaven, sun, moon, &c. A river has its own divinity or is a divinity. The mighty men of old continue their task after death and claim worship. Soul, spirit, divinities of nature, in one word, the powers, mix and are combined with one another and cannot always be distinguished from *the* power, Mana, which is rather a quality or name of men and animals and beings and things than a kind of substance.

3. The superhuman with which man must for his well-being cultivate connexions with fear and trembling, appears also in a third form. The missionaries have for long been telling us about it. They knew the tribes and their languages better than did the traveller. But they had the Book of Genesis with them. Were they not perhaps too ready to read the God of the Bible into the conceptions of the heathen? They spoke of the high Gods and Creators of primitive religion. The man who introduced these into modern research was a Scot, Andrew Lang. Fr. W. Schmidt with his enormous erudition has taken this problem most seriously. It is to him not

¹ Cf. Durkheim, *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*; O. Raknes, *Mølet med det Heilage*.

a problem. It is an evidence for the truth of Genesis. Preuss, Carl Clemen, and Pettazzoni have made excellent observations on this matter. I myself have also taken part in that discussion.¹ These high beings shattered unmercifully the usual evolutionary scheme of animism, polydemonism, polytheism, &c. One cannot exclude these beings from real religion. Because (a) often they have instituted the ceremonies; (b) sometimes they are objects of worship, and even of sacrifices; (c) it is remarkable that the individual turns spontaneously to these high beings outside prescribed sacred rites, when he is in trouble or when his mind is uplifted to the One, who enjoys his awe and trust.

But distinction is necessary if we are to be able to apprehend anything in a clear way. I have observed the chief or most essential quality of those 'high gods', 'all-fathers', 'culture-heroes', 'creators', and called them *a poliori*, *frambringare*, 'producers', *Urheber*, or, to speak with Andrew Lang, 'Makers'. This proposal has found approval with eminent scholars as Martin P. Nilsson, Ankermann, Clemen, Pettazzoni, Karl Marot, and others. Because the chief quality distinguishes them from the spirits and souls and gods, they give an answer to the question about origin and cause. It is no wonder that they are placed and recognized in the sun, in the moon, or in the thunder, which is the voice of Daramulun. But they are not themselves taken from nature or human life. They constitute a presentiment of the Creator. Therefore it is most natural that Christian missionaries should often have translated the Christian word 'God' by such names as *Shangti*, *Unkulunkulu*, &c. But this question of translation is a most complicated and debated problem. The conception of originator does not suffice. The roads run, one through polytheism to speculation about unity and the One divine being, another through prophetic revelation to monotheism.

Thus we have already found among primitive people a consciousness of divine action. A method, to be afterwards developed into the celestial ladder of mysticism by a more experienced psychology and a higher culture, exists among all known tribes and peoples, in varying forms but with the

¹ Cf. Söderblom, *Werden des Gottesglaubens*.

same fundamental character and the same purpose. Both ascetic exercises and divine action are to be found; but, in answer to questions, primitive people answer unanimously that the latter, the calling of the deity, is the essential part of religion.

This combination of divine revelation and exercise found among primitive people (which probably gives us a notion of a religious state preceding the higher forms of religion) afterwards appears in five forms, which are essential to our subject. In two forms the method, exercise, or training prevails. In two other forms divine activity prevails. In the fifth human *ascesis* and divine action co-operate or, at any rate, are equally considered.

1. Exercise and training have been brought to the highest pitch in the *Yoga* of India. *Ascesis* is indispensable to every serious religion. Nowhere else has it gained such importance as in India.¹

2. We shall see how, in India, training becomes everything and the deity nothing. When Jinism and Hinayana Buddhism eliminated the conception of God in a religious sense and no longer sought salvation and help from any divine being, this was practically but stating and making clear what already existed. Religion becomes reduced to a state, a frame of mind, peace and rest, freedom from all cares and impressions. In Jinism and Hinayana this is attained by the approved psychological method apart from any kind of divine help.²

3. But in the long run, exercise, training, and the saving of one's soul does not suffice in religion. Man cannot manage by himself. His need of God asserts itself. In the higher forms of religion this is manifested in two ways, indirectly in the refinement of individual souls and more directly in what we must call a type of religion which experiences and accentuates divine activity or prophetic revelation. We shall study more explicitly such phenomena, which may be called from a psychological and historic point of view 'reacting', not 'acting' mysticism—or a powerful intrusion of the divine into the human sphere. Most of these lectures will be devoted to

¹ Cf. Lecture II, 'Religion as Method, Yoga'.

² Cf. Lecture III, 'Religion as Psychology'.

this series of problems. But here we may observe a decline or absence of methodical training also in some other cases. On its higher levels, mysticism has rules for concentration and spiritual vision. But exercise has lost its dominant position. The soul dwells in higher and purer spheres and has won a more profound estimation of human life.

This third way should be mentioned before we commence the study of religion as psychology and religion as devotion.

In analogous forms this third way is found not only in India, but in all higher religion. It is characteristic of intellectual and refined mysticism even where it has not been seized and defined by a personal and overwhelming divine power. (That certainly is in some measure the case in the Bhakti of Hinduism and Mahayana and in other quarters, but appears with perfect clearness and in a form which differs in principle, in the religion of revelation.) The rule may be confidently established that the higher the aim of the mystic, the clearer and purer his intellect, the more noble his will, the more decisively does he leave the ways and tricks of the method behind. He worships God in spirit and in truth.

We have seen already what will later on be more fully elaborated, that there is interplay between the activity of man and the activity of God.

According to Christian faith the activity of man in the matter of salvation is altogether God's work. The method is the activity of man. When that becomes all, the divine is put aside and the point may be reached where India consistently encourages a religion without faith in divine activity. The opposite occurs in revealed religion, where God is all and man nothing, and to a certain extent in Bhakti piety also.

In the greatest mystics the activity of man becomes purified and sublimated to a spiritual vigilance, awaiting grace from above or within.

From this point of view it would be profitable to endeavour to get a closer knowledge of the great leaders in divine fellowship and speculation and spiritual seeing who appear in the Upanishads. One seems to discern that for the greatest of them ascetic training had not the same importance as it afterwards had for the salvation path of Yoga.

We shall see how Gotama Buddha, to the despair of the ascetics, cancelled the entire apparatus of self-torture, strange, toilsome and much admired, and found a simpler way to Nirvana, peace. The ascetics had admired him, but now they took offence, until he explained to them the truth which had dawned to his inner sight.

Plotinus has very little to say about the celestial ladder and the stages and methods of asceticism.

'Dean Inge, in drawing a most illuminating contrast between Plotinus and later mystics such as Böhme and Blake, points out that while Böhme, for example, used to hypnotize himself to induce abnormal spiritual conditions, Plotinus always insisted that the divine vision must be waited for (*Philosophy of Plotinus*, ii. 152 f.). This meant a patient quieting of the soul of which but few are capable.'¹

We turn to the greatest of the religious thinkers and mystics of India, Shankara. In him it seems as if Yoga had vanished. The perfecter of the doctrine of the One had a spirituality that despised the artifices of Yoga training. We notice something of the antipathy of an aristocratic intelligence to ascetic methods. How could one of the great masters of mysticism wish to be regarded as a *yogin*? Here training was superseded by the higher spirituality of man. Dr. Rudolf Otto has launched a new epoch for our study of mysticism by his books on Indian and Western mysticism. He has shown how manifold are the phenomena concealed under the term mysticism. Even for intellectual seeing, a preparation is needed. Man must keep himself alert, susceptible, chaste, and free. That is why he must needs condemn an asceticism, a training, which claims the attention of man on its own behalf and thus hinders perfect seeing. Dr. Otto remarks quite correctly that Shankara would have regarded the term *yogin* as an insult.

Bernard of Clairvaux points out the difference between the ecstatic union with God and the state to which the regular ladder of mysticism leads.² Like all other mystics of the higher order, he is thus fully conscious of the difference

¹ H. Kennedy, *Philo's Contribution to Religion*, p. 235.

² Fr. Heiler, *Der Katholizismus*, p. 503.

between that which man himself can accomplish by training and exercise and that which is a divine gift.

No one is more obviously suspicious of the auto-suggestion of religious exercise than Master Eckhart. He had no time to busy himself with methods and stages and the successive states of mind of ascesis. In him everything is concentrated upon faith and its fruits in life. The fulfilment of faith, the 'beholding', is expounded by his speculative spirit with a never tiring, sometimes daring, wealth of language. But it must manifest itself through the love and purity of heart and life.¹

If we turn to the great man of Spanish aristocratic mysticism, St. John of the Cross, we find ourselves in another spiritual climate but are still on the heights of communion with God and can make the same observation. He lived at a time when the question of exercise had been made a very pressing one by St. Ignatius Loyola. But St. John of the Cross was of another temper. The biographer of his spiritual life, Jean Baruzi, writes:

'St. John of the Cross carefully avoids every word, every vision, every comprehension, which is distinctive. He allows no verbal images to break in upon a spiritual voice which is to lead us beyond every distinctive datum. . . . Must not this materialization, must not this localization of meditation, if we think of the inner logic of the future system, be alien to John of the Cross? Do they not on the contrary lead him astray, whenever he searches out his own soul? Neither in making a picture of the scene nor in the use of the senses do we find a natural introduction to the mysticism which he is going to elaborate, a mysticism consisting in forgetfulness of everything perceptible. We must not argue from the fact that these Exercises are not a mystical book. Mysticism is not a closed world, superimposed upon any ante-mystical thought whatsoever. There is a mysticism prepared for by a certain method: there is another contradicted by this very method. In this respect there is no agreement possible between the technical language of St. Ignatius and the ante-mystical postulates implied by the doctrine of John of the Cross.'²

We are less surprised at St. John's mistrust of exercises and

¹ Cf. Otto, *Eastern and Western Mysticism*.

² Baruzi, *Saint Jean de la Croix et le problème de l'expérience mystique*, p. 93.

methods when we learn that he nourished his spirit on Holy Writ. Fr. Juan Evangelista, who knew him, said at his trial:

'I never saw him read any other book but the Bible (which he knew almost entirely by heart); he read also the treatise of Saint Augustine *Contra Haereses* and *Flos Sanctorum* and when he preached, now and then, which happened but rarely, or when he gave his intimate lessons, which was his usual occupation, he never read any other book but the Bible. . . . The Bible was the only book that John of the Cross had with him in his cell.'¹

Mystic as St. John of the Cross was, he could not help being influenced by the Scripture, where there is not a trace of ascetic mysticism. We shall have reason to return to this subject, when we come to deal with Henri Brémond's criticism of ascetic piety and shall study the kinship as well as the difference which exists between evangelic and mystical piety. Here I will only remark that the all-dominating significance of exercise has been involuntarily repudiated by the heroes of mysticism in all times.

We remember that the prophet Amos indignantly repudiated the appellation of *navi*. What had he to do with the ecstatic professional dervishes, *neviim*? He was the first writing prophet in history. At the other end of the line is the dictating Mohammed. He, too, was anxious not to count as a *kahin*. He would have nothing to do with these virtuosi of religion.

'For thou [Mohammed], by the favour of the Lord, art neither a soothsayer (*kahin*), nor one possessed (*majnun*)'²
'Neither is it [the Koran] the work of a soothsayer (*kahin*).'³

Here we are in the territory of revelation, i.e. prophetic religion, no longer on the common ground of mysticism.

If we ask why the great mystics of every kind despise ascetic training or have little confidence in it, the answer is easy. What they want is no perfecting of human qualities and faculties. They do not believe in any human effort. God or the Divine or the inscrutable mystery of peace in heart or that mysterious existence which they call the Infinite or Nirvana or even the Nothing, is to them much too great to be conquered by means and methods invented by men.

¹ Ibid., p. 148.

² Koran, Sura lxx. 29.

³ Ibid., Sura lxix. 72.

No, man is blind, the deceiving and many-coloured material world and the devices of his own mind fill his attention and his soul with unreality so that he becomes blind and cannot see the One Reality. Men lack knowledge and insight, they are ignorant, they must learn. They must shut their eyes and their ears to all that existence which is an illusion and a delusion in order to let the eyes of the heart apprehend the Real. It would be foolish to think that any exercises should be able to accomplish such a conversion from the unreal to the real. Man has only to leave out all the secondary things, which claim his will and love, and concentrate his attention on the one thing necessary. Those mystics who are really worthy of being called by a name indicating the mystery of divine intercourse, have a much too spiritual view of the divine reality and of human conditions to indulge in all kinds of ascetic arts satisfactory to minor souls, but much too worldly for the true pilgrims on earth.

The great mystics believe in insight, knowledge, intuition, not in training, asceticism, just as the heroes of faith do not believe in works or exercises, but in trust.

Here we make an observation which must be noted. In the literature of religious exercises and mysticism there is infinite talk about stages, psychological methods, physical and spiritual measures, and the states of mind provoked by them. It is natural, it appertains to the human organism, that the methods and the stages are, in the main, everywhere the same. In the West they are simplified into three: *via purgativa*, *via contemplativa*, *via unitiva*. But, after all, the greatest mystics have had very little use for these distinctions. The division into states which after methodical training are to appear one after another, is proved to be artificial, appropriate to the *epigoni*. Even an ascetic mystic of the highest rank, like Saint Teresa, admits that in reality the stages coalesce. We have to do rather with differing points of view than with steps following one another.

‘Thus we are gradually forced to the conclusion that the so-called “degrees of orison” so neatly tabulated by ascetic writers are largely artificial and symbolic: that the process which they profess to describe is really, like life itself, one and continuous—

not a stairway but a slope—and the parts into which they break it up are diagrammatic.’¹

The same holds good of the *ordo salutis* of evangelic piety which, in a pedantic manner, has been subdivided because of the irrepressible desire to introduce a chronological order, while the mutual relation is rather one of logical order. Thus, in the highest mystics the method gives place, as in the instruments of prophetic religion, to God’s work in man, the spiritual communion with the Highest.

Even in the mystics of the quality we have mentioned, it is scarcely that their own spiritual nobility has relegated religious art, power, and exertion to their proper sphere, but that the exercises of human piety are dissipated by the highness and nearness of God. However much mystics may talk of the ‘emptiness’ which they covet and of the identity of their own soul with God, yet it is perhaps the active divine power of positive or revealed religion which causes them to perceive his majesty. It is the ‘I’ of God speaking sovereignly to the ‘thou’ of man.

‘Certainly, if mysticism is twilight in the states of feeling and in the ecstasies of the soul, in bridal caresses and in tearful bliss, in “mysteries” and devotional sentimentalism, in the vapours of sacraments and sacristy, in auto-suggestion and in exercises, in intensification of the self and methodical training, in Yoga and narcosis, then nobody has been further from mysticism than its greatest master. Beyond all *bona opera* and *merita*, beyond all sacred magic and all instilled powers of grace, there flourishes in him a life in and from the *praesens numen* in humble opening of the self to its influences by faithful thinking, which, however, is more a being sought than a seeking, more a being known than a knowing, more a being seized than a seizing, which is sure trust and lasting adherence, which does not wish to enjoy, but to serve with the power received, and which finally is overwhelmed by experiences and their interpretations which are strange to us perhaps, but which do not, however, even in their most subtle shapes, disown the earth, over which they soar and by the continual contact with which they obtain their particular quality and colour.’²

¹ Underhill, op. cit., p. 308–9.

² Otto, *Aufsätze das Numinose betreffend*, p. 106.

It is no wonder that Dr. Otto correlates Master Eckhart with his greatest successor, the evangelic perfecter of medieval mysticism, Luther. 'Certainly the distance is wide between him and the greater man who was to come after him, but in his piety are already planted those seeds which in his successor grow up and then violently thrust away that which is too alien.'¹ 25, 874

4. The most notable thing in the history of training, exercise, and method in religion is that by an overwhelming experience of divine power man and his claims are put aside. One might say: God himself takes away all confidence in the power of man and thereby also in his methodical exercises. God becomes all, man nothing. Thus it was in Bhakti religion, perhaps in Socrates, certainly in Zarathushtra's prophetic religion and in the Biblical revelation.

5. The heroes of revealed religion have no need of exercise to get near to the deity. They are rather tempted to wish to be delivered from the mighty grip of God. But exercise is needed by ordinary religious people, in order that faith and love and communion with God may not be neglected or whittled down. Human preparation is given more scope than in the heroes of revelation. Asceticism is right and necessary, as long as it does not hide or dim the fact that God is the alpha and omega of religion. Perception of the use and necessity of exercises *can* create a kind of joint partnership between God and man, where salvation, peace, and bliss are regarded as a result of their co-operation, as in semi-Pelagianism. But exercises *can* fulfil their purpose without encroaching upon the consciousness of the absolute sovereignty of God.

Man must keep his heart watchful and open to the working of God. But also his own seeking, his exercises, and his prayer are the work of God. The apostle has given the classical expression to this paradox: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.'²

St. Gregory said: 'When a soul truly desires God, it already possesses Him.'³

¹ Otto, *Aufsätze das Numinose betreffend*, p. 106.

² Phil. ii. 12-13.

³ Frank Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, p. 202.

In the great Sufi poet Jalal ud-din Rumi's *Masnavi* there is the wonderful story about the man who cried aloud to God. Satan mocked him:

'No answer comes to thee from nigh the throne, how long wilt thou cry "Allah" with harsh face? The man feared that he had been repulsed by God. But Khizr was sent to him by God and said to him:

'God has given me this command:
Go to him and say, "O much-tried one,
Did not I engage thee to my service?
Did not I engage thee to call upon me?
That calling 'Allah' of thine was my 'here am I'.
And that pain and longing and ardour of thine my messenger;
Thy struggles and strivings for assistance,
Were my attractions and originated thy prayer.
Thy fear and thy love are the covert of my mercy,
Each 'O Lord' of thine contains many 'Here am I's'".'¹

When Pascal uttered the anguish of his soul in the silence of the night, he heard the answer: 'Be comforted, thou wouldst not have sought me, unless thou hadst found me. Thou wouldst not have sought me, unless thou hadst possessed me. Be not uneasy.

'I come to thee by my word in the Scripture, by my spirit in the Church, by the gifts of inspiration, by my power in my ministers, by my prayer in the faithful.'²

¹ Whinfield, *Masnavi*, p. 192.

² J. F. Astic, *Pensées de Pascal*, p. 502.

Supplement

RELIGION AND MAGIC, WORSHIP AND WITCHCRAFT¹

DURING the whole course of its evolution religion has regarded witchcraft as its worst enemy.

A. 'Power' is valuable. The medicine-man, the shaman, the priest, have access to 'power' and know the secret arts whereby one can cause or heal disease, slay an enemy at a distance, &c. This is an exceedingly valuable power and insight as long as it is employed in the service of the tribe—just as dynamite and technical ability are valued in a civilized country as long as they are employed in useful undertakings or in the defence of one's country. But should any one manufacture bombs for his own private revenge or in a fanatical lust for destruction, he is regarded as the enemy of the community, feared and hated in proportion to his cleverness. If the thrower of a bomb has compassed the death of many innocent people, the crowd will make short work of the man who is pointed out as the doer of the deed. It is likewise among primitive people. The worst of all crimes is to employ superhuman power and knowledge to injure the tribe. And an unsuccessful or greedy medicine-man or priest may relapse into black magic or sorcery of that kind. If he is then found out in his nefarious doings, he will be slain without mercy. If he falls under suspicion, he will have to prove his innocence in a perilous test or ordeal. If laxatives or poison have no effect upon him, if he can walk on red-hot iron unharmed, or, if he has passed any other equally difficult test, it is a proof that he has 'not eaten anyone', i.e. not compassed the death of another by black magic. In the usual course, suspicion involves judgement.

Black magic, to be sure, like the taboo rules, acts by auto-suggestion, not to mention the possibility of evil wishes being able to harm, while the party aimed at is ignorant of what is happening. A negro gets to know that a wizard is 'pointing

¹ Söderblom, *Översikt av Allmänna Religionshistorien*, Stockholm, 1919, pp. 189–

with a stick' at him or is 'eating him'. He feels violent pains and dies after three days.

But the real curse of black magic does not consist in its effect, but in the arbitrariness and insecurity which it entails. No one is safe from the accusation of being a wizard or witch. A man dies what we call a 'natural death'. Such a death is incomprehensible to primitive people. They do not find it strange when a lion or a crocodile, an arrow or the sea kill; that is to them a 'natural death'. But evil magic must be at work when a person falls ill and dies without violence. It must be ascertained who is the guilty party. Here is an open way for vengeance and evil calculations. The person upon whom suspicion falls is 'sold'. Numbers of innocent people still suffer in this way a cruel death. For the black magic of which they are accused is the sin of sins—sin against the tribe, the community. Black magic is prohibited. It is characteristic of the brahman's lust for power and of the inroads of magic into Indian religion, that the priests, the brahmins, reserved to themselves the right of practising the black magic forbidden to all others.

B. 'Power' is frequently divided into a good and an evil species. The languages of primitive people often have a special word to denote the harmful 'power'. The magician employing the latter gets into disrepute and is detested, whereas the opposite is the case with the one who employs the beneficent *mana*.

The difference is more clearly marked where good and evil spirits are known. All dealing with evil spirits is branded by religion. The deities of lower or conquered tribes are often looked upon as evil powers, retaining a particular reputation for magical power. The superstitious turn to them rather than to their own gods. Thus the Laplanders enjoy a reputation for wizardry. The prophetic religions have developed the conception of a devil, the Prince of Evil. These include Zoroastrianism, and later Jewry with its offshoots, Christianity and Islam. Other princes of evil are in Hinduism Yama, whose name reappears in the Emma of Japanese Buddhism, and Mara, the Tempter and Lord of Death in Buddhism. From the religious standpoint it must be an abominable crime to

communicate with the devil and his angels. *Sorcery* and *witchcraft* in the proper sense, i.e. communication with evil powers, have played a great part in the history of religion. The Siberian sealer is reproached with sacrificing to evil powers. He confesses his crime but adds: 'It is just their aid that I need in my job.' Thus witchcraft need not be animated by an evil intention. It is still a crime in the eyes of true worship. But, as a rule, the devil's aid is sought in order to do harm. Then witchcraft (alliance with evil powers) resembles black magic. But they do not coincide. Black magic is sin, because of the *intention*. God's name can be used with evil intent. The Mosaic commandment says: 'do not misuse the name of God for evil desires.' The sin of witchcraft lies in the *means*—the powers of evil which are invoked and employed.

The Synod of Paderborn, A.D. 785, enjoined that: 'He, who, blinded by the devil, believes, after the manner of the heathen, that a person can be a witch and burns the supposed witch, shall be punished with death.' But this principle was trampled under foot by Protestant Christians as well as Roman. The great St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) taught that witches exist since evil spirits exist. The dreadful delusions of the victims of witch-trials and the fanaticism of judges and executioners called forth opposition, but for long it was in vain. One of the best known of the opponents of witch-trials was the Dutch cleric, Bekker, who in a book called *The Bewitched World* in 1691 wrote: 'Witchcraft is only found where people believe in it. Cease to believe in it, and it is no more. Break away from these foolish and out-of-date fables and exercise yourselves in piety.'¹

C. A less deep and bitter opposition sometimes arises between the official priesthood and private enterprise in the sphere of magic. Outside the acknowledged and regular office of medicine-man, magician, or priest who carries on the holy rites and sacrifices, private practitioners may offer their services and arts: exorcism, healing, and fortune-telling. No wonder that the regular practitioners look askance at their competitors, quacks of magic and religion whom the acknowledged 'doctors' despise and oppose. The mass of

¹ B. Bekker, *De betoverde Wereld*, 1691-3.

the people in Paganism often make a clear distinction between the priests and the private exorcists, who have a lower position socially. The Babylonian-Assyrian religion allowed plenty of scope to magic and exorcism, but distinguished exorcists belonging to the priestly class from the private exorcists. In the later stages of religion it often happens that independent men of God, going their own way, are preferred by the people to the official priesthood, who may have stiffened into a dead routine.

D. In religion man worships the deity. In magic man employs the deity for his own ends.

The distinction can scarcely be upheld on the lower levels. Religion and magic are intermingled. While the men are away fighting, the women in Malacca are busy oiling stones so that the arrows of the enemy may glide off their husbands just as drops of water do not sink into the oiled stone. That is magic. But sometimes the women pray to a god at the same time: 'In the same way let the arrows leave our husbands unhurt.' That is religion.

Magic has no need to concern itself with spirits. Its chief laws are three: (1) Things happening at the same time are dependent on each other. Rain falls—the ground is wet. The ground is wetted—to make rain fall. The wind shakes the tree. Children believe that the trees cause the wind. Primitive people shake the tree to make wind. (2) Like makes like. In the war-dance one fights against imaginary enemies. But the real enemies are overcome at the same time. If the image of a person is pierced, the original is slain. (3) The part influences the whole. If we have hair, morsels of food, or a nail-clipping of a person, then we can injure him. Hence the dread of exposing hair, nails, and morsels of food. And hence the anxiety to know all the names of a god, so as to be able to coerce him. The so-called sympathetic magic is founded on these rules which act directly, without the intervention of any deity. But magic can also have recourse to spirits and gods. Its characteristic feature, then, is, as we have already said, that the deity is regarded as a means, a thing, an instrument in the hands of the magician, not as a power over man.

Only on the higher and highest levels of religion does the contradiction between magic and religion become manifest. Magic is then revealed to be the most dangerous adversary of religion. For the essence of religion is submission and trust. The essence of magic is an audacious self-glorification. Magic knows no bounds to its power; it deems itself able to make rain and to change the course of the heavenly bodies. Religion, in the proper sense, begins when man feels his impotence in the face of a power which fills him with awe and dread. In magic man is the master. In religion the deity is lord. Magic denies and destroys the feelings of devotion and reverence which uplift the soul of man. To this very day, religion comes to life in a person only when the perception of shortcomings and limitations have forced him to his knees before the superhuman, only when he has gained a true dignity by submission to the elemental power of existence, God. Magic is thus in direct opposition to the spirit of religion.

Black magic offends against the tribe and consequently is forbidden and hated. Private magic offends against the acknowledged rights of the priesthood and consequently is opposed by it. But when the true nature of magic becomes manifest, it is seen to offend against God himself, whether it is 'black' or 'white', private or official. For the essence of religion is adoration and trust. But magic knows nothing of adoration and trust. Whether it has recourse to the powers of evil or to the gods of the lower races, or whether it applies to the national deity, trust and reverence are lacking. When the deity of the nation is approached, it is in order to coerce him. God is degraded into a means towards selfish ends. God is treated like an impersonal power or thing by means of forms and rules. The state of the heart is irrelevant.

II

RELIGION AS METHOD. YOGA

IN this lecture we shall consider:

I. The perfection of psychological ascetic training in India.

II. The two chief parts of psychological method: the negative method which endeavours to isolate the mind from all impressions and empty it from all content; and the positive method, where the divinity or the spiritual goal commands the soul entirely and takes its whole attention and fills it.

III. Further, we shall see what no method can ever achieve: namely, the faith and its fulfilment in blissful union and intuitive contemplation. We shall indicate six characteristics of that bliss, which is sometimes called, in a rather confused way, ecstasy.

IV. Lastly, we shall see that the two chief methods, *via negationis* and *via positionis*, derive from different conceptions of the Divine.

I

Yoga is connected with the root *yuj*, to join, to unite. The verb *yuga*, *yuja*, *yoja* means to yoke, to harness, fix, fasten; also to concentrate oneself, to meditate deeply. Yoga philosophers are opposed to the derivation from *yuj* in the sense of connect, since the union of the soul with God is by no means characteristic of the Yoga doctrine. But *yuj* can also be interpreted 'to yoke magic power or the gods'.¹ The masculine substantive, *yoga*, yoking, team, union, contact, has in Indian psychology and religion the particular sense of mental concentration, to release oneself energetically from all that occupies or distracts the mind and fix one's attention on the spiritual.

Yoga has become the name of ascesis, exercises in the widest sense. Yoga denotes especially one of the philosophical schools or movements of India.²

I

We notice first the well-ordered system which, under the name of Yoga, has a place among the six classical systems of

¹ Hauer, *Die Anfänge der Yoga Praxis*, p. 7. ² Poul Tuxen, *Yoga*, p. 32 sq.

thought of India, enumerated in the *Sarva-Darshana-Samgraha* of Madhava Acharya which dates from the fourteenth century, and elsewhere. The Yoga-sutras are ascribed to Patanjali¹ who can scarcely be the same as the grammarian.² Patanjali is said to be the one who added a personal deity to the eternal souls of Samkhya and thus transformed an atheistic doctrine into theism. He added a 'Lord', a personal deity, Ishvara. The main source of our knowledge of Yoga is Vyasa's commentary on the Yoga-sutras. The commentary is usually dated from the seventh century after Christ. Here Yoga has the same significance as Samadhi: absorption, deep meditation. The four chapters treat of (1) Samadhi, (2) the means of attaining Samadhi, (3) the superhuman accomplishments gained by the ascetic in his exercises, and (4) Kaivalya, perfection, which consists in 'absolute oneness', the complete release of the soul from all kinds of influence and connexion, its freedom and bliss.

The exercises are both practical and theoretical. While the Yogi, the ascetic, is training himself in moral exercises, the regulation of the breath, castigations, and other methods which have been practised in many lands and ages but which in India have been carried to an unparalleled degree of virtuosity, he must all the time keep in view the inner collecting of the mind—first, the four stages of conscious concentration and then the unconscious concentration.³ Hereby he is to attain perfect indifference to all that occupies the mind of man: visible objects, such as women, food, and drink; magical accomplishments or spiritual objects such as the promises of the scriptures and the various states of celestial bliss.⁴ Tuxen renders and explains the text: the four stages of the lower indifference consist in (1) keeping the senses apart from the objects; (2) making certain forms of desire and longing more remote; (3) the stage when yearning remains only as a state in the inner mind, *manas*, but is unable to move the senses; (4) the vanishing of this yearning even before the enticement of celestial bliss. The higher indifference goes deeper; it releases the Yogi from even the finest bonds and

¹ E. Carpenter, *Theism in Medieval India*, p. 212.

² Tuxen, op. cit., p. 16.

³ H. Oldenberg, *Lehre der Upanishaden*, p. 264.

⁴ Tuxen, op. cit., p. 170.

lifts him out of existence.¹ To attain to this state, exercises and meditation must go hand in hand with practical training. The stages or steps by which the training methodically lifts the soul up to Samadhi are eight in number.

1. First come the five usual moral commandments. It is characteristic that the moral law confronts the ascetic at the outset. It has its place in religion here, not as worship, not as obedience to God, but as a preparation for the higher stages. The five commandments: not to kill, to speak the truth, not to steal, to live chastely, and not to own property, are universal in religion and stretch far back into time. The first commandment forbids the bloody sacrifice. Generally speaking, sacrifice appertains to ignorance, *avidya*, which is an obstacle to salvation. Yoga is more radical than Bhagavad-gita which, with its remarkable doctrine of vocational loyalty allows killing in strife when it is an obligation of one's profession. In Yoga a fisherman may not kill a fish even if he otherwise abstains from killing living creatures. Nor may plants be killed, nor anything living. Here we get a notion of a piety which is incompatible with the various trades and vocations of a human community, and so must needs carry on a profession of its own, apart from the productive professions.

2. The next stage is asceticism, study, and love of God. To asceticism appertain exercises in endurance of hunger and thirst, in resistance to cold, in abstinence, in silence, and in mortification of various kinds. But the experience of asceticism is already advanced enough for Vyasa and others to caution against too violent asceticism which may bring on illness.

Moreover, certain books are to be read, particularly the magical abracadabra of the Mantra texts and the sacred word *OM* is to be repeated. Even here, however, there is a certain reaction against the excesses of the magical formulas and the text-books. With regard to Ishvara, the deity, one should do everything for his sake with no consideration of one's own advantage.

3. The third stage comprises the various attitudes to be assumed by the meditating ascetic with hands and feet,

¹ Ibid., p. 140.

tongue, and all parts of the body. The big toes are to be held by the hands. Another attitude is to sit with the soles of the feet on the thighs. The Maitrayana Upanishad is aware of the attitude attained by pointing the tongue down the pharynx, while the gaze is directed towards a point between the eyebrows, a well-tried means of attaining a trance.¹ A state is aimed at in which the soul shall have passed beyond the perceptions of the senses and the usual accompaniments of consciousness, and be entirely directed towards the object of meditation.

4. Even the regulation of the breath has developed in India into an elaborate science. There are rules to say how the breath is to be emitted and how retained. Any one can prove the obvious effects of quiet or rapid breathing, of oral or nasal inhalation, of regular or irregular breathing on the mental state of man. The authors of the Upanishads had experience of the clearness and quietness that possess the soul as the result of regulating the breath. Oldenberg refers to the ancient ritual custom of holding the breath to guard against pernicious powers.² In India, as elsewhere, the breath was regarded as a seat of life. *Atman*, *Atem*, the breath, became the vital principle of all existence, the unity, the all-penetrating Spirit.

5. The next step is that the organ of thought, which in the Yoga doctrine is called *citta*, is deepened and concentrated to such a degree that not only are the senses not occupied by the outer world, but they do not even receive any impression from external objects.

6. Following on the first five stages the Yogi reaches the inner kernel of asceticism and self-absorption. The next stage is called *Dharana*, and consists in the organ of thought, *citta*, being directed to a particular object—the navel, the heart, the nose, or the tip of the tongue, or at some external object.

7. Then comes *Dhyana*, contemplation, which, unaffected by anything and undisturbed by all conceptions and thoughts, concentrates entirely upon, and thereby penetrates into, its spiritual object.

8. Now the Yogi has attained to *Samadhi*, described by

¹ Tuxen, op. cit., p. 152.

² Oldenberg, op. cit., p. 261.

Deussen in the following words: 'subject and object, the soul and God, are so completely blended into one that the consciousness of the separate subject altogether disappears, and there succeeds that which is described as *nirātma-katvam*, i.e. selflessness.'¹

The spiritual and physical exertions of the Yogi procure him supernatural powers. He can make himself small and light and hover freely in the air. He can make himself big, so that he reaches up to the clouds. He can change the elements of matter, food and drink, at his pleasure.² He can prevent animals from moving either themselves or their limbs.³ He can become as strong as an elephant, as fleet as the wind. Water does not make him wet, nor fire burn him. He can make himself invisible. He can travel in heaven, on earth or in the air, as he likes. He can heal all manner of diseases.⁴ All this we know so well from primitive medicine-men and the wizards and ascetics of China and other countries.

Yoga sleep, a hypnotic state in which consciousness slips away, is highly esteemed. What eulogy is lavished by the Upanishads on the bliss of dreamless sleep! By the aforesaid method of stretching his tongue, putting it into the pharynx, and at the same time fixing his gaze on a point between the eyebrows until the tears flow, a Yogi can attain a state resembling death. The body grows stiff, cataleptic. It is one of the most admired tricks of Indian ascetics to allow themselves to be buried while the hypnotic state is proceeding. But the Yoga-sutras and Vyasa's commentary do not make much of this.

R. Garbe correctly remarks:

'When the authors of the Yoga texts hold out the promise of these supernatural powers, it must not be forgotten that these authors were men who regarded very seriously their task of expediting the final attainment of the supreme goal. They certainly did not intend consciously to deceive. They have simply given expressions to the conviction of the Yogis, who believed themselves by means of suggestion in the hypnotic state to be in possession of such powers. . . . That these miraculous powers

¹ Deussen, *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 392.

² Tuxen, op. cit., pp. 183-4.

³ Uvasagadasao, vii.

⁴ Tuxen, op. cit., p. 193.

may be gained by means of the Yoga praxis the most enlightened Brahmins of the present day are themselves immovably convinced. The reason why such powers of the Yogi are not openly exercised is attributed to the preliminary condition of their attainment, viz. to the absolute indifference of the Yogi to the things of this world.¹

When the Yogi has purged away all that binds, cripples, disturbs, and distracts his spirit and has concentrated himself entirely on the One and Only, there follows at last pure seeing, the immediate intuition. Lack of knowledge, *avidya*, is now overcome. Pain arises from ignorance. The bare foot can be wounded, wounded by a thorn. But one can refrain from trampling on the thorn, or one can have a shoe on one's foot. By knowing this, one may avoid pain.² In the same way, insight avoids the misery and suffering of the world. The ascetic defeats the envious endeavour of the gods to lead him away from the path to perfect knowledge. The gods fear the power of the ascetic.³ Now he is at the goal, beyond the conscious Samadhi, arrived at the unconscious Samadhi which is the last, final means to the perfect release of the soul, *kaivalya*.⁴ *Purusha*, the essential nature of man, is released from the three *guna*, the fundamental qualities, 'the three strands',⁵ viz. Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, goodness, passion, darkness. These qualities, which appertain to matter, have served their turn, are rolled up and out of action.⁶ *Citta* also, the organ of thought, has served its turn. Separated (*kevala*) from everything else in its own nature, *purusha* remains as pure vision.⁷

It must be credited to Vyasa, the commentator, that he warns the perfected ascetic against pride, exalted as he is above gods and men.⁸

The absorption into Brahma, spoken of in the later Yoga literature, does not occur in the Yoga system. Nor does the original Yoga system know of any celestial bliss, of which

¹ R. Garbe, 'Yoga' *E. R. E.* xii, pp. 832-3.

² Tuxen, op. cit., p. 198.

³ Oman, *Mystics, Ascetics and Saints of India*, pp. 182 sqq.

⁴ Tuxen, op. cit., p. 202.

⁵ Carpenter, op. cit., p. 217.

⁶ Ibid., p. 218; Tuxen, op. cit., p. 204.

⁷ Tuxen, op. cit., p. 204.

⁸ Ibid., p. 199.

there are abundant descriptions elsewhere. It knows only of the feeling of freedom enjoyed by the released spirit:

‘Among the means of overcoming the nine obstacles we notice first the four prescriptions which deal with the yogi’s relations to his fellow-men. It is the method which consists in cultivating the feelings which in Buddhism may be called the four infinite, or the four brahma states (*brahma vihara*). A yogi should cultivate kindness towards all beings who rejoice; pity towards all who suffer; gladness towards all who have a worthy character; indifference or perhaps, rather, a state of non-affection towards all of unworthy character. It is the *metta*, *karuna*, *mudita*, and *upekha* of Buddhism. It is correct to see in these social virtues in Buddhism, as in the Yoga system, a stage in the technique of meditation. On the other hand, it is incorrect to regard them as successive rungs on the ladder of meditation in such wise that *upekha*, in relation to *metta* and *karuna*, is on a higher level. It depends on the quality of the object and its position with regard to the subject, as to which of the four *viharas* shall be employed. Along with the four brahma states, or instead of them, the yogi can try the regulation of the breath or the well-known form of self-hypnotism which consists in fixing the activity of the mind upon a definite, visible object, e.g. the tip of one’s nose or an invisible one, e.g. the eight-leaved lotus of the heart, situated with the point down between the thorax and the pelvis.

‘When the yogi has attained freedom from the fluctuations of *citta*, he acquires “an undisturbed inner peace”, i.e. “seeing by means of a knowledge which does not successively pass the usual stages”. The object of the intuition is “a delicately concealed and distant thing, inaccessible to oral communications, to conclusions, and to ordinary perception”.’¹

2

What we have now briefly described is a well-ordered system of fairly late date. In some parts it makes dim the real nature of Yoga. Let me bring forward two points before considering the origin, spread, and development of asceticism in India.

1. In contrast to Buddhism, the Yoga system asserts the existence of the soul.² Moreover, in contrast to Buddhism Yoga is orthodox, i.e. it acknowledges the Scripture, Veda,

¹ Tor Andrae, *Mystikens Psykologi*, pp. 411-13.

² Tuxen, op. cit., p. 40.

and particularly the part which is most important to theology and mysticism, the Upanishads. Tuxen¹ points out the difficulty Yoga has had in reconciling its dogma of the many souls, which it shares with Samkhya, with the passages in the Upanishads which speak of the unity of the soul. The very essence of man, *purusha*, is unchanging in all changes.²

Still, Yoga has much in common with Buddhism which had, by then, already played its part in India proper. This resemblance concerns not only Buddhism, but all the movements, systems, and monastic orders which in the sixth century B.C. and later, sought peace by fleeing from the world and mortifying its effects. Both the Jina Order and Buddhism have borrowed Nirvana from Yoga.³ According to the Yoga-sutras, all existence is suffering.⁴ The cause of suffering, as we have seen, is *avidya*, lack of proper insight. Ignorance is deceived by what is enticing but transitory and a cause of pain. As in Buddhism, the spokesmen of Yoga have seen that exaggerated asceticism provokes disharmony. Consequently, the Yoga system cannot be held responsible for the extreme refinements of self-torture in India. Plutarch already knew that the people of India excelled the Greeks in asceticism. Common to Buddhism and Yoga, also, is the polemic against sacrifices which we have already noticed. The Yoga-sutras betray acquaintance with the later more universal Buddhism, Mahayana, which builds on the mercy and pity of Buddha, the Buddha god, and the Buddha gods.

2. The Yoga god, Ishvara, is an incongruity; he contains within himself an incurable contradiction. He is to save souls while, at the same time, according to the Yoga doctrine, itself derived from the Samkhya, he is himself but a soul and inferior to the perfected souls of the ascetics. Here the Samkhya thinkers found it easy to raise inevitable objections.⁵ Ishvara, the personal god, is an alien element in the Yoga doctrine, as we know it. Both Samkhya and Yoga may have had an earlier, less distinct form. The correct conception of the gods is expressed by the fact that the ascetic proudly repels the endeavours of the gods to keep him back.⁶ With

¹ Tuxen, op. cit., p. 41. ² Ibid., p. 91. ³ Oldenberg, op. cit., p. 329.

⁴ Tuxen, op. cit., p. 117.

⁵ Ibid., p. 68.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 198 sqq.

the supernatural powers he has won by training and self-torture, the ascetic stands above the gods. Ishvara is not an integral part of the system, as Poul Tuxen and others have shown. There is no task here for a helping and saving deity. The ascetic saves himself. The doctrine of the personal god was had recourse to in order to obtain a helper and not to be in a worse position than the Bhakti piety. It was designed to meet the needs of popular piety. But in reality this Ishvara has no other task than to be the object of meditation and contemplation. The word Bhakti occurs and yet more the thing—speech concerning devotion to the deity, love to the deity.¹ But neither the name nor the thing agree with the Yoga system.

Epicurus and Molino show that a pure and lofty piety can be built on the doctrine of a god or gods who remain aloof from the way of the world and the fate of men and in their lofty beauty are only objects for the admiration and imitation of men. Such a notion, however, was quite foreign to Yoga and to India at large. The fate of the gods was sealed. The ascetics had left them behind. Ishvara in the Yoga system is only one of countless souls. Why should he alone remain unreleased and clogged with matter, *prakriti*, albeit with its finest stuff, *sattva*, and thus be lower than the other souls who attain to Samadhi? His *raison d'être* as Ishvara is to help and save. As a mere soul he cannot act. For this purpose he must have a touch of some material quality, *guna*. Ishvara and his love and help are a later addition for the better equipment of Yoga in competition. There is no room here for God and devotion to God. Had the Yoga doctrine become or remained true to itself, it would have held firmly to the atheism of Samkhya.² It was the fate of its earlier sisters, Buddhism and Jinism, to draw the consequence of atheistic religion: the self-salvation of man accompanied in Buddhism with a radical denial also of the existence of souls.

3

Though composed in later times, the Yoga system betrays its primitive origin. Training, ascesis, was of very ancient

¹ Ibid., p. 70.

² Ibid., pp. 56, 61–2 sq., 66, 163.

date in India. Likewise the power of castigation and training to gain for man magic power and supernatural accomplishments. The ancient classical name is *tapas*, which literally means 'heat' and 'heating'.¹ Training brings a sense of zeal and exaltation. Among the Melanesians at Saa on Malanta all persons possessing the wonderful 'power' are called 'hot'. As early as in the Rigveda² a primeval being, Uttanapad, is mentioned, whose name denotes a bodily attitude adopted by the ascetic, with crossed legs and upturned soles of the feet. As early as the Chandogya Upanishad the ascetic profession appears as one acknowledged or required by religion alongside the vocation of the student and the position of the householder.³ Hauer finds this passage doubtful, but refers to Vratya, the perfected Yogi of the Atharvaveda.⁴ Strict rules for the hermit life date from at least the sixth century B.C.⁵ and numerous accounts of these lonely seekers of salvation occur in the two great epic poems. We scarcely need follow Farquhar in declaring the hermit life to be a relapse into a primitive state prior to agriculture. Such an explanation is unnecessary. The phenomenon is a universal one. When nature, culture, and community life, do not fulfil what they have promised, the soul wishes to flee to solitude. Notwithstanding the mutual opposition of schools, orders, and movements, they held the ascetic ideal in common.

'They no longer desired wealth, position, success, children, pleasure. Human life and all earthly things were not only empty and worthless but evil powers, clouding the soul with ignorance, and entangling it more and more in the net of birth and death. The whole world of phenomena was inherently antagonistic to the spiritual life. They therefore decided to divest themselves of every element of the common life of man. They renounced the worship of the gods, the worship of their ancestors, caste, home, the use of fire, marriage, family, money, property, amusements, work of every kind, and ordinary food and dress, and lived a wandering life, getting their food by begging. Their aim was to lay aside everything that belonged to the sphere of karma, i.e.

¹ Oldenberg, op. cit., p. 260.

² Rigveda, x. 72. 3; Oldenberg, op. cit., p. 258; cf. A. Ludwig, *Rigveda*, ii. 576.

³ Farquhar, *The Crown of Hinduism*, p. 252.

⁴ Hauer, op. cit., p. 3.

⁵ Farquhar, op. cit., p. 252.

the whole world. Thus the *sannyasa*, which may be translated "renunciation", "world-surrender", was used to designate their practice as a whole. They were therefore called *sannyasis*, Renouncers. Since they wandered about and begged their bread, they were called *parivrajakas*, Wanderers, *bhikshus*, Beggars. All this is true of each of the great schools of the time, of Buddhists and Jains as well as of Hindus.¹

The forefather of the Indian ascetic was the primitive medicine-man whose methods were brought to perfection in Atharvaveda. Even in the Rigveda primitive exercises can be discerned or divined, as J. W. Hauer has shown. Training is not an original discovery of India and its ascetic mysticism. True, Yoga won a virtuosity and a comprehensiveness that are unmatched in any other religion. But what is really noteworthy is its consistency. The profession of a medicine-man, Yogi, was in India not simply one among others but an independent form of religion, a religion consisting of a method affecting body and soul which was psychologically effective and one day discovered that it did not need a god but could save by itself. Thus we may speak here of *Religion as method*, a religion lacking a belief in a deity in the proper sense and lacking metaphysics in general, whether expressly denying metaphysics and belief in a deity or not. We shall also find that this religion, thus reduced to psychology, a doctrine of the soul, could not endure, but was saved from withering and drying up in its earthliness and spiritual selfishness by the great inconsistency of Gotama Buddha.

Ascetic exercises belong to the oldest accessible Veda-literature. Consecrations and other ceremonies, where man comes into contact with the holy, especially the sacrifice, the most sacred of all, which gradually was considered the centre of the universe and existence, require all sorts of Yoga tricks. Fasting was often observed before the sacrifice.² The rules for breathing, which Hauer traces from the fiery breathing due to dancing, and the roaring and other expressions of wild ecstasy gave rise to speculation on the breath, Atman. Sweating was practised, silence, solitude, fasting, sexual abstinence. Since in Rigveda dancing is never

¹ Ibid., p. 254.

² Satapatha-Brahmana i. 1. 7-9.

ascribed to men, it seems to have been then already out of use as a means of ecstasy.¹

The head is rolled or the body shudders until the ecstasy appears. Particular exercises are concerned with the manner of sitting on the straw at the Soma sacrifice in the company of the gods and crying out for rain. When the Yoga exercises were separated from the sacrificial religion, the ritual sitting was continued, as favouring concentration and reflection. *Upanishad*, 'sit down to pay homage',² was the name of the ideal poetry which was afterwards termed *Veda*, 'the knowing', or *Vedanta*, 'the perfection of knowing'. Dirt also begins to acquire holiness. One should refrain from bathing so that the clogged pores may favour the ecstatic condition. Hauer supposes that the saffron-yellow dress of the Indian ascetics which was taken over by the Buddhist monks was at first a faded blood-colour of which the singer says: 'They dressed themselves in red-yellow dirt.'³ Mendicancy also formed part of the asceticism of the Rigveda age. Herbs and poisons were known which provoked intoxication and hallucinations. It was no mere chance that asceticism was called *tapas*, heat or heating. Magical powers were sought thereby. The word *tapas* became the term for all kinds of self-torture and the superhuman power attained thereby, while the word *Yoga* from the outset included a higher spiritual notion.⁴

Asceticism and ecstasy were intended to give to man divine powers and to make him a god himself. Nowhere has deification been carried farther than in India. Oneness with Brahman, originally 'the power' and the power-filled sacrificial word, that oneness which afterwards, for centuries and millenniums, was attained and beheld on the chilly heights of speculation, was at first a possession by the god.⁵ The enhanced vitality of the Brahman, intoxicated by the soma, is thus akin to that intellectual seeing which was an especial feature of the devotion at the worship of the Fire.⁶ *Tat tvam asi*, 'thou art it', the classical formula which afterwards expresses the unity of the human spirit with the infinite spirit, originally denoted perhaps simply 'possession' by the

¹ Hauer, op. cit., p. 45.

² Ibid., p. 27.

³ Ibid., p. 33.

⁴ Ibid., p. 115.

⁵ Ibid., p. 127.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 151, 165.

god. A motley collection of castigations and self-tortures afterwards obtained the significance of a regular way of life of which we can read in Taittiriya Upanishad.¹ The Brahmans seek Brahman Atman by the study of the Veda and sacrifice, but also in penance and fasting. For that reason the wise men of old renounced children and ownership, wandering about as beggars.

The goal is to know the imperishable, says Yajnavalkya, the same teacher who employs the image of a loving couple when speaking of the union with the Self.²

Concerning Atman Brahman it is rather a question of a *unitas*, a unity that already exists but which must be seen, than of a *unio*, a union which is to be entered into.³

In certain connexions the insufficiency of human exertion is demonstrated.⁴ What is required is insight. The senses must be curbed; but he who so lives will get to know Atman.⁵ This firm fettering of the senses is called Yoga.⁶ Man cannot find the way by himself, but needs for the purpose a teacher who knows the way to Atman.⁷

In another Upanishad we read of the king who yielded himself to the highest ecstasy and stood with outstretched arms, gazing into the sun.⁸

Outside the circle of the Brahmans, the sacrificing priests, asceticism and ecstasy were developed among laymen in the violent and ecstatic Muni, and in the Vratya, the war-ecstatic who sang wild songs. The mumbling of the sacred syllable *OM* created, according to Hauer, the sitting practitioner of breathing, the Yogi who mumbled *OM*.⁹

4.

The Yogi who developed out of the ascetics of the Veda-age and the Upanishads was to have no mean destiny. He became dangerous to the gods. When they see him fast and

¹ Taittiriya Upanishad, 3.

² Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad, iv. 3. 21 sqq.

³ Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad. iv. 4. 7; Chandogya Upanishad, vi. 8. 1.

⁴ Isa Upanishad; Kathaka Upanishad, 2. 23 sq.

⁵ Kathaka Upanishad, 6. 4 sqq.

⁶ Ibid. 6. 11.

⁷ Ibid. 2. 7 sqq. ⁸ Maitri Upanishad, i. 2. ⁹ Hauer, op. cit., pp. 169, 188.

mortify himself and produce 'heat', *tapas*, they tremble, fearing for their power. He becomes their master. Frightened as they are, they begin to imitate him. They cultivate asceticism and become Yogis themselves. The gods have recourse to penance. Prayapati submits to self-castigation in order to gain strength to create.¹ He torments himself with asceticism. He sings hymns of praise and castigates himself to gain strength.² The waters also desired to propagate themselves. They tortured themselves with asceticism, they 'heated' themselves. Manu creates by means of castigation and cult a woman.³

But the gods still fall short of the Yogi. They are only gods. He is a man.

The self-glorification of asceticism surpasses even that of the sacrificing priest. Both attain to bliss by their works, *karma*. Their path of salvation is a *karma marga*. The original work, the sacrifice, has not only been pushed aside, it has vanished away on the horizon. The asceticism which originally appertained to the sacrifice is now self-sufficient. The gods, never denied in India, become mere accessories in the cosmic scheme, of no significance for salvation. For this the way had been paved by the sacrificial religion. The priest called forth the gods; indeed, he made the gods whom he afterwards worshipped. The idea recurs even in later sacrificial religion, for instance, in the much discussed pastoral letter of Cardinal Katschthaler.⁴

In the Sunahsepa-legend⁵ the gods to whom Sunahsepa applies refer him from one to another: Prajapati, 'the foremost of the gods' to Agni, 'Fire'; Agni to Savitar; Savitar to Varuna; Varuna again to Agni; Agni to all gods; all gods to Indra, 'the mightiest among the gods'; Indra, delighted at the homage, to the Asvins; the Asvins to the ruddy dawn. The ascetic succeeds to the priest as the lord of the gods. The gaze was no longer directed to the heights. Very early the Aryans of India had recognized in their own inward being The Eternal One and The Eternal in contrast to all the

¹ Satapatha Brahmana, ii. 2. 4.

² Ibid. xi. 1. 6.

³ Ibid. i. 8. 1.

⁴ Mirbt, *Quellen zur Entstehung des Papsttums*, p. 400.

⁵ Aitareya-Brahmana, vii. 13-18.

vicissitudes of life. They had found refuge in an insight that they were one with the eternal spirit. Samkhya, India's first methodical system of thought, denied this world-soul, this eternal being, and in its stead assumed, in agreement with animism, a plurality of soul-beings. Samkhya and Yoga, originally two separate systems, were united. It is significant that Yoga as a doctrine held the pluralist theory of the many eternal souls. One reason for this was that Samkhya had a clearer perception than Vedanta, the doctrine of Unity, of the reality of matter and, consequently, of the power of evil. The 'thought-steerer' and spiritual athlete, Yogi, favoured a system that fully acknowledged the toil and earnestness of his task. To the Vedanta matter is a sham, the work of Maya, illusion. Christian Science would find support in such a view, but not in the more realistic Samkhya, which therefore contributed to the theoretical and metaphysical framework both of Jina, 'the conqueror' and 'Buddha', 'the enlightened one'. Yogi, the ascetic, takes many forms. He became the hero-ideal of India and, moreover an ideal which, embodied in an independent profession,¹ penetrated life and society, from the height of a sublime unity with Atman Brahman down to inhuman self-torture and arrogant filth. 'A repulsive but not unimportant branch of asceticism is the deliberate cult of dirt. Our disgust at the filthiness of the ancient saint may be somewhat modified if we remember how recent is our extreme care for cleanliness.'² The Jina monks excelled in uncleanness.³

Nowhere has training risen to such heights as in India. Nowhere has the aptitude for ecstasy and kindred phenomena been so great as there.

A reaction sets in from the dirt of Yoga. What is the good of ascesis, with the dirt and the beard? Indeed, the question is raised whether it were not better to have a wife as friend and a son to be a light over one's life.⁴ There are declarations in favour of an active life and family life. In two passages at least of Mahabharata the life of the master

¹ Farquhar, op. cit., p. 254.

² Inge, *Christian Ethics and Modern Problems*, p. 116.

³ Ayaranga-Sutta, i. 7. 8.

⁴ Aitareya-Brahmana, vii. 13.

of a household is preferred.¹ In Brahma Dharma we read:

A man is only half a man, his life
is not a whole, until he finds a wife.
His house is like a graveyard, sad and still,
till gleeful children all its chambers fill.²

Both lives could be practised. After the man had founded a home and fulfilled the ensuing obligations, and when his sons had grown up, he might become possessed with the desire to retire to the stillness of the forest and the freedom of the hermit, in order to ponder the salvation of his soul.

However, he was far in the rear of the monk, the professional ascetic who surpassed both men and gods.

India distinguishes between three *marga*, pathways: *Karma Marga*, the path to salvation by works; *Jnana Marga*, the path to salvation by insight; and *Bhakti Marga*, the path to salvation by love, devotion, and faith. Of these the first is the most ancient. The work to be performed, which in India more, perhaps, than elsewhere, came to be regarded as the most important in heaven and earth, the centre of all existence, the condition for the life and comfort of gods and men, was sacrifice. Appertaining to sacrifice, however, were asceticism, training, self-torture and fasting; and this asceticism is a work too. Gita mentions both works: (1) sacrificial doctrine, Veda, sacrificial gifts, and (2) asceticism.³

Tapas, heat, and *Yoga*, the employment or 'yoking' of the supernatural power, became the main feature. The sacrificing priest to whose profession also appertained ascetic exercises and magical arts, overtopped the gods. He called them down. He made the deity. He ruled over the gods, used them for his own ends, which otherwise is the mark of witchcraft, in contrast to that submission to the deity which characterizes religion and piety.

When the ascetics discovered that sacrifice is unnecessary on the higher level and turned asceticism into an independent way of salvation, they became, by their power and knowledge,

¹ Mahabharata, xii. 343 sq., 652 sq.

² Brahma Dharma, ii. 2. 1; J. Muir, *Metrical Translations*, p. 137.

³ Bhagavadgita, xi. 55.

the lords of the gods. To save a morsel of their reputation, the gods were obliged to learn Tapas and Yoga and themselves become Yogis to the best of their ability.

It would be wrong to pass a sweeping judgement on all Yoga and all asceticism in India. We must carefully distinguish between tricksters and impostors, the virtuosi of self-torture with their dirt and their pride, on the one hand, and on the other the adepts of spiritual seeing who sought deliverance from all that troubles and beclouds the spirit, in order to enjoy the liberty of the soul when freed from all, even the slightest, hindrances. For the former the main thing was and is, the supernatural accomplishments, the reputation and the power which asceticism aims at winning. For the latter, for those who, according to the Gita and that Indian theology and philosophy which is worthy of esteem, are the real Yogis, the goal is spiritual freedom in truth. In his *Republic* Plato denounces the impostors and quacks of mysticism, though he was himself under the influence of the mysteries and mysticism.¹

The aim of this asceticism is, in reality, not salvation by will and work, but salvation by insight, by release from ignorance, *avidya*, and error, and by the soul's absorption in the Being. In the Gita a distinction is made between the path of Samkhya through insight and the path of Yoga through works. The aim of this genuine asceticism is clearness and insight, and it is a *Jnana marga* intended to overcome ignorance, *avidya*. A Yogi of this type surpasses the ascetic, just as he surpasses the scholar and the sacrificing priest.²

II

Religion demands asceticism. And not religion alone. All activity of the mind and soul resembles athletic activity in demanding exercise and self-discipline.

'The assiduous practice of self-mastery and the most sparing indulgence in the pleasures of sense are the "philosophic life" which the Greek spirit recommends as the highest. The best Greeks would blame the life of an English clergyman, professor,

¹ Plato, *Republic*, ii, 364 E.

² Bhagavadgita, vi. 46-7.

or philosopher as too self-indulgent; we often forget how frugally and hardly the Greeks lived at all times.¹

Adolf von Harnack writes about Goethe:

“*Immer strebend sich bemühen*”, “ever toiling strive”, that is not only, not even in the first place work in itself but, as the end of “Faust” teaches us, devoted work for others. In the prime of his life, however, Goethe represents to himself work in itself—and that is the second thing—more and more as *self-denial*. Of this he spoke but little and with pain in earlier periods; now it grows more and more clear to him that a permanent and high-minded self-denial is necessary to prevent us from gradually succumbing to the world, and to make us maintain our proper position. “He who wishes to do something for the world must not engage himself with her”, so definite the demand is now. And his last great novel is, as already the title shows, altogether tuned in that tone. Man must submit to an educational discipline and learn privation, in order to develop what is latent in him, to realize his ideal and reach perfection on *his* course. Self-denial in this sense is the only asceticism which Goethe approves and indeed demands. It has nothing to do with monastic mortification or with self-reprobaton; it is on the contrary inseparably connected with the joyful “*Immer strebend sich bemühen*”, ever toiling strive, yes, it is this striving.²

Mysticism strives to free the mind from all that would seize its attention and to concentrate it upon the Spiritual, upon God.

We distinguish the two main methods, the negative and the positive.

I

All hindrances must be removed. The soul must be denuded of all that belongs to the earthly and selfish existence. The mind must be empty. The method must have the goal indicated by Eckhart: ‘Let it be said to thee: to be empty of everything created, that is to be full of God.’³

The mendicant monk of India aims at the same state as the great German mystic.

‘The absorption completes what the ascetic-ethical exertion has begun: the detachment from everything earthly, the annihila-

¹ Inge, *The Church in the World*, p. 129.

² Harnack, *Erforschtes und Erlebtes*, p. 163.

³ M. Eckhart, *Schriften und Predigten*, i. p. 14.

tion of the crude life of the soul. In the fourfold absorption (*dhyānam caturvidham*) the mystical process of the *anupubbanirodha* takes place, i.e. the destruction of the earlier state of the soul, the successive simplification, reduction, emptying of the entire intellectual and emotional life of the soul—the same process which the Neo-platonists by an appropriate term call Haplosis, and the German mystics with a wonderful pregnancy characterize as *Entwerden*. The life of the meditating begging monk more and more loosens the connexion with the real world, grows more unitary, more indefinite, poorer, more empty, till at last a spiritual zero is reached, a state akin to ecstasy, a state of absolute inner quiet and unity.¹

From the time of the Upanishads we find clearly expressed the negative aim which Buddhism calls 'the extirpation of all life-content', Plotinus *Haplosis*, and German mystics *Entwerden*.

'Never since the Upanishads has the mystical problem in question been the unification of the soul by the purification of the heart: on the contrary it has been a simple preliminary self-recoil, a negation of every sort of mental image, of everything tending to disturb thought from the outside. The originality of this mysticism consists in the repudiation of every alien element, whether of metaphysics or cult. It abstains deliberately from considering substance and attribute, objectivity of data of the senses, and permanence of personality, divine grace, and divine transcendence. Limited strictly to this "connecting link", this material side of human thought which paralyses its liberty, it strives to dispense with this relation, imposed upon it, which knits thought to any object of perception whatsoever, and with those external and partial truths, which it constantly needs in order to become normally conscious of itself from time to time.

'Although the question of "spirit-matter" dualism is not laid down in metaphysical terms, it is presupposed here: implicitly this mysticism affirms the *a priori* superiority of spirit to matter, of (angelic) intuition to (human) understanding, since it seeks to free the conscience from the slavery of the five senses and from the yoke of the discursive effort.'²

Disturbing factors must be eliminated. Man's mind is filled with sense-impressions. His attention flutters like a

¹ Heiler, *Die buddhistischen Versenkungsstufen*, p. 359.

² Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane*, p. 70.

leaf at the mercy of any puff of wind. He needs to be isolated, to be alone, to be quiet. Therefore, away with sense-impressions. The physical must not receive attention, whether its state is one of well-being and surfeit or one of pain. Man must be released from all this in order to concentrate on the spiritual. This negative path is the one marked out by the Yoga of India and the Nidanas of Buddhism. All energy is directed towards closing the gates of the senses, removing impressions, suppressing every concrete image and conception, making the mind free. We have seen how far this art has been carried in India. What is the result? What remains when everything has been removed? One of the greatest mystics of the nineteenth century in the West, Blake, has said it: 'The Infinite' in the neuter. We knew it before: infinity, emptiness. That which cannot be determined and which the mystics therefore call *Nichts*, Nothing, *Neti*. This empty space is called by Hinayana *Nirvana*. What we have to notice is that the method may be essentially negative, the removing or putting aside of all that veils or hinders or captivates the mind. The goal is perfect liberty, yes, that perfect emptiness which is absolutely without a care.

One may ask whether this emptiness really is, as Eckhart says, to be filled by God. Do the mystics really meet God in this emptiness, or only themselves? Does the feeling of peace and bliss, which perchance arises, signify that the soul is filled with God?

One who honestly endeavours to curb his senses and turns his attention to peace may attain, perchance, not only to emptiness and himself, but may also feel a breath of the peace of Eternity. We would like to think so. But opinions differ even among men of religion. The Swedish scholar John Cullberg has lately investigated the matter.¹ We shall take up this point again.

2.

Via negationis cannot suffice as long as religion seeks God and purposes a spiritual content. It must have its complement in *via positionis*. A study of the history of religion, on a broad

¹ Cullberg, *Religion och Vetenskap*.

view, reveals these two methods which are complementary to each other.

Release from that which binds, snares, and distracts us can be obtained more effectively by another method than by seeking to suppress the emotions. Any one can prove it. Release from the casual and the earthly, from the instincts, and from cares and sense-impressions, can be accomplished without any action on the part of man, through the unconditional occupation of his mind by an object which dims all else on his horizon.

A friend says that a thought or a problem was able in his young days to captivate him to such a degree that he would sit in his study all night until dawn. Time did not exist, and he was thrilled by a feeling of happiness, a harmonious delight. His state was 'monoïdeistic'. Nothing was able to distract his attention. He had made no preparations; no asceticism had led him to this isolation of spirit. Only the subject took a mighty hold of him. Yet he ascribes a considerable part to the will. He had energetically worked at this idea, turned it round and round, attacked it from various points until, when he scarcely realized it, the thought itself seized him and filled him so that all else vanished. Psychological experiences of this kind do not necessarily belong to religion. Meditation and contemplation, like ecstasy, are widely employed as religious terms. But concentration on a single idea, the 'monoïdeistic' state, need not have anything to do with religion.

The 'monoïdeistic' state may have greatly differing contents. Merely as such, it is a matter of indifference to the religious mind. It has significance for religion when it is directed to God. Meditation and contemplation, like ecstasy, widely employed as religious terms, are in themselves neutral: All depends on what the object is that has captivated the mind.

One may with particular pleasure dwell on some success one has experienced, repeat to oneself the kindness or flattering words of other people and, as it were, suck them like a piece of candy, recall the various elements of a joyous moment, chew the cud of one's feelings and thoughts so that, at last, one attains a monoïdeistic frame of mind.

Or one may meditate on some future enterprise. One lives in a future pleasure. Or it may be a task which is attractive and inspires hope. One may live in such thoughts, forgetting all else, one's attention isolated from the world around, one's mind concentrated upon a single subject, according to the species of meditation or contemplation.

And it may be something which is by no means likely to bring happiness. A temptation may exert an influence over a person which at last becomes irresistible. One can meditate and contemplate what is evil as well as what is good, worldly things as well as spiritual. Henri Brémond is quite right in saying that meditation by itself says nothing as to the worth of a man or as to what occupies his thoughts and indicates the content of his life. One can meditate upon a crime. One can become absorbed in it and with shuddering voluptuousness think it out in detail, thoroughly prepare it and, day after day, week after week, live in such thoughts. Proof of this can be found in Dostoievsky and other writers on psychology.

Meditation has meaning and significance for the spiritual life not by its psychological course, but exclusively by its content. The same holds good of ecstasy. It is not a question of the psychological experiences and states which a person makes or undergoes, but of the object which leads that person into a situation where, at last, he is irresistibly carried on by an unmistakable current, maybe to a point outside the sphere of consciousness.

Coercion of this kind by God is a characteristic feature of revealed religion and Bhakti piety, but occurs also in such mystics as are drawn unconditionally to God and strip themselves of that which belongs to the lower nature of man without having too much recourse to the method of *via negationis*.

The oft-repeated rule of Jesus for spiritual education runs: Watch and pray. It thus comprises a negative and a positive element. Watching denotes primarily abstinence from sleep. There are other circumstances which make man dormant to spiritual things. In St. Luke viii. 14 we hear of the cares of riches and the pleasures of life, and in St. Matthew xiii. 22

of the cares of the world. The soul must not be weighted by too much property or troubled by too great scarcity. It must be kept alert, vigilant, and free. Once or twice Jesus recommends fasting to enhance the vigilance and strength of the spirit in man. He needs to renounce not only fleshly desire but also the enticements and impressions of worldliness so that attention may not flutter from one thing to another.

This vigilance is not an end in itself. Watch and pray. For Jesus, prayer is never an exercise, an asceticism. No one tells us what passed when, in the evening or the night or the early dawn, he dwelt in solitude with his Father. We may discern a reflection of those hours in the Sermon on the Mount, in the exhortation to go into the chamber, shut the door, and pray to the Father. So much we may know with absolute certainty from all the Gospel tells of Jesus, that his prayer never was merely a state of soul attained by some sure method, an *oratio mentalis*, a Prayer of Quiet, a meditation, but an intercourse and conversation with the heavenly Father, an outlet for anguish and uncertainty and for questions that needed answer; the bursting forth of a tone of jubilation, a trembling yet confident intimacy longing for undisturbed intercourse with the Father in Heaven, although the feeling of nearness and fellowship with him was wont never to cease during the duties and occupations of the day.

III

Much can be accomplished by the method. By isolation from disturbing sense-impressions and by contemplation, stillness of soul can be attained. Mental prayer can be induced, as well as resignation and a feeling of peace. But two things cannot be accomplished by any method. It cannot impart *faith*, nor that perfection of faith which is called '*seeing*'. Auditory perceptions, visions, trances, and ecstatic states can, under favourable conditions, be attained by tried psychological methods. But not faith, nor sight.

The faith gained by self-suggestion has no value. Faith must be given. It is part of the sacred inheritance of the race.

It is strengthened and confirmed by the experience of God's guidance. By the work of the Spirit it becomes renewed, strong, and, in an unimagined way, full of meaning for the life. But all this is unattainable by man himself. Even in him whose faith has a preponderantly theoretical character of conviction based on ideas, insight, and conclusions derived from nature and the course of the world, revelation and his own life, faith is something which no method is able to bring about. Faith is a gift.

Faith shall be changed into sight. This bliss can be experienced even here at extraordinary times, e.g. the experience of conversion, the solemn moments of the assurance of salvation, and in the mystical union.

This experience has been called by many names: ecstasy, mystic union, intellectual 'seeing', transcendental perception, &c. The confusion of names is the greatest possible, but the thing itself is perfectly clear. Here we are moving in the field of reality. Tor Andrae,¹ who has drawn a sharp line between this state and the other experiences of mysticism and who in general has blazed some clear paths in this tangled field, would reserve the name of *ecstasy* for this experience or grace. I myself should like to term it the perfection of faith or the change of faith into sight and its enjoyment of bliss at certain moments and in certain people. The difficulty is that the words *ecstasy* and *ecstatic* have been used in so many and various senses.

The etymological derivation of *ἔκστασις* is equivalent to that of 'trance' from *transire*, viz. a state beyond or outside consciousness where a person is not under his own observation, but only under that of the persons around him.

On the other hand, many take ecstasy to mean all uplifted states of mind. The phrase, 'to be in an ecstasy' implies merely—to be enraptured or highly delighted.

A very general implication is given to the word by the Norwegian Ola Raknes, who has written an interesting book on the virtues of ecstasy.² He makes it signify enthusiasm, devotion, uplift of mind, rapture, and generally speaking, a violent or at times more tranquil state of mind, which collects

¹ Cf. Andrae, op. cit.

² Ola Raknes, *Møtet med det Heilige*.

and dominates the being. Ernst Logren rightly collocates devotion and ecstasy.

'Devotion always implies absorption, sinking into an object, while subjecting it to intense and one-sided attention. At the outset the will may exert itself in order to direct attention to the object, but all at once the object itself absorbs the entire attention, captivates the soul and causes all its interest and attention to go in one direction. The soul is "simplified", gathers around one single idea. It forgets itself and the world. The more profound and intense my knowledge of that other, the less do I know of myself. To notice the ego is only to prevent the soul from being captivated by the object sought, wherefore it is demanded: lose thy self! Feeling becomes object-feeling, the object becomes "all in all" in the mind. One becomes "the object itself", becomes "one" with it, becomes entirely the object.

'Ecstasy implies that the attention is directed towards an object at the highest tension, all notice of other objects being excluded.'¹

Ecstasy is strongly intensified devotion.

'Ecstasy is the most complete upsetting of the ego, the most radical change of the mental direction that we know. It is the strongest unifying force that is possible; hence also the strongest foundation for character, inner harmony, vigour and fortitude. It is the contrast to disintegration and disharmony. No wonder that its supposed external cause is more real, more valuable, and more imposing than any other. It has many degrees of intensity, but the conception of something valuable above everything else—that which possesses a quite particular value in a quite particular world—cannot be accounted for by anything else than the most intensive of all experiences of value. In relation to this, ordinary devotion and concentration are but a reflexion which borrows its light from the source.'²

Logren is correct in his observation of the difference between methodic ecstasy and revival in the evangelic sense, i.e. spontaneous ecstasy.

Evelyn Underhill, however, does not put ecstasy on a level with the state of mystical perfection. She says of *Union*, 'the true goal of the mystic quest':

'It is a state of equilibrium, of purely spiritual life; characterized by peaceful joy, by enhanced powers, by intense certitude.

¹ Logren, *I Religionsforskningens Föregång*, pp. 81–2.

² Ibid., p. 96.

To call this state, as some authorities do, by the name of Ecstasy, is inaccurate and confusing: since the term Ecstasy has long been used both by psychologists and ascetic writers to define that short and rapturous trance—a state with well-marked physical and psychical accompaniments—in which the contemplative, losing all consciousness of the phenomenal world, is caught up to a brief and immediate enjoyment of the Divine Vision. Ecstasies of this kind are often experienced by the mystic in Illumination, or even on his first conversion. They cannot therefore be regarded as exclusively characteristic of the Unitive Way. In some of the greatest mystics—St. Teresa is an example—the ecstatic trance seems to diminish rather than increase in frequency after the state of union has been attained: whilst others achieve the heights by a path which leaves on one side all abnormal phenomena.¹

As far as I can see, Evelyn Underhill is right here. Ecstasy is not only etymologically equivalent to trance, but is also actually employed of states of mind in which consciousness is weakened or is non-existent. I would like to call this state quite simply *bliss*.

Briefly we may say that man cannot by any method or exercise stir up within himself *faith*, reliance, trust in God, nor the perfection which faith gains in 'seeing' and in the mystical union, nor the *bliss* and tranquillity which fill the soul when, at conversion, or in blessed moments of the later life, God becomes all to the soul.

Compared with the violent and more conspicuous forms of primitive and barbaric religion, the tame and seemingly ordinary forms of higher religion are open to the charge of atheism when seen from the primitive standpoint of a more orgiastic and statutory religion. In later religious research the importance of the doctrine, the intellectual side of religion, has been exaggerated and thereby, also, the value of the so-called normal phenomena in the life of the soul and the community. In his booklet *Das Geheimnis in der Religion* Bernard Duhm drew attention to the right and value of the mysterious, rushing, irrational, and ecstatic element.

'The best of life is intoxication.' In a reaction against a previous intellectuality we are now, perhaps, inclined to overrate the high value of ecstasy. It is not necessarily good.

¹ Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 170.

The mystics themselves and, indeed, even the medicine-men, knew how to distinguish between a good ecstasy and a less desirable one. Like meditation it is neutral in itself. All depends on the content. But when there is an ecstasy of the right kind, it collects all the faculties of the soul and flows on in a mighty flood which gives force and emphasis to that which occupies the mind and is the object of its gaze.

But ecstasy can also be disintegrating. I have a lively remembrance of a young man to whom it was extraordinarily easy to attain the ecstatic state. He had a great gift of speaking with tongues and was ardent in the works of the spirit. When quite young, he was taken about and admired in spiritualistic circles. One day he came to me. His restless eyes with their far-away look at once indicated a peculiarity in his psychological equipment and experience. He was not able to continue. He felt that these frequent exercises and ecstatic states threatened to disintegrate his ego. He needed a definite vocation and the clearness of reason in his intercourse with God.

1. The ways of attaining ecstasy are various. And upon them the value of the ecstasy essentially depends. It can be attained by intoxicants, or fasting, or wild dancing. It can also be attained by spiritual means, by concentration of the attention, by going apart from all outside influences and concentrating the mind or the gaze on a picture, on a day in the life of Jesus, on the majesty and works of God.

2. Disposition plays an important part. There are people who have endured extreme suffering, loss of blood, sickness, and pain and yet have never in all their life fainted. Others, again, are prone to faint with little cause. So with ecstasy. There are people who, however much they concentrate on spiritual things, never pass the boundary that divides consciousness from unconscious meditation. For others, again, it is very easy to pass into an extraordinary or ecstatic state of mind.

3. Another distinction which it is needful to make, and which has been made throughout the ages, both by mystical adepts and ordinary pious people, is the difference between artificial and natural ecstasy, between what is accomplished by man's

own acts and that which the Spirit of God alone can accomplish in man.

4. We have already said how much is meant by the subject of reflection, seeing, or ecstasy. Ecstasy and meditation need not be religious states at all. They are merely psychological states. They obtain religious significance when religious conceptions fill and uplift the soul.

5. A criterion of the value of ecstasy has, in all ages, been seen in its effect; and the earnest mystics have not been content merely to assert the peace, joy, and bliss, experienced in the uplifting of the mind, and the reactionary dreariness and emptiness, pain and forlornness which, in agreement with the laws of psychology, cause depression after exaltation. No; the genuine mystics have in all ages asked themselves: Did I become more loving, more forgiving, more faithful in my vocation, more fit to perform the duties incumbent upon me by reason of that extraordinary experience, that uplifting into the third heaven? Did I become more useful to my fellow-men?

With ecstasy may be compared the dream-state in sleep, as when St. Francis heard the angel playing on his fiddle. If he had drawn another stroke on the string, St. Francis would have died of joy. Such experiences may be of great significance, whether they occur in the waking state or in dreams. They melt the ice of the soul, they give release, they in some degree strengthen assurance. But the real test always lies in the answer they supply to the question: What effect had they on the moral nature and conduct of the person? We will return to this point.

The mystics themselves, who reckon the ecstatic states as the wondrous and divine gifts of life, draw this distinction between good ecstasy and unprofitable or even hindering and harmful ecstasy.

When here speaking of ecstasy or seeing or bliss we refer to enhanced states of mind which are infrequent and brief.

Thomas Chalmers tells of a rapture which lasted a long time.

'I remember (he says) when a student of divinity, and long ere I could relish evangelical sentiment, I spent nearly a twelve-

month in a sort of mental elysium, and the one idea which ministered to my soul all its rapture was the magnificence of the Godhead, and the universal subordination of all things to the one great purpose for which He evolved and was supporting creation.’¹

The one who has had such experiences may perhaps not be inclined to use numerous and unusual and splendid words about them. That which is sublime and great and of profound importance in the life of man has perhaps once for all been expressed in words which have been often used and thus become conventional but retain their inexpressible content to one who has known the grace of God’s presence.

Mrs. Oliphant says of Chalmers:

‘The letters of spiritual communion—which for a whole lifetime continue to call upon the reader to take the very first step in the Christian life as if no advance upon that were possible, and which after thirty or forty years of full acceptance of the mystery of faith still exhort both writer and reader to “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ”, as if they had not been devoutly doing so, as if that had not been the secret of their lives all the time—are, it seems to us, singularly unprofitable writings, notwithstanding that they have been so largely received by the devout as the language of religion. We have no profane meaning in saying so. It seems to us that a man who *had* lived by that faith, and in the light of constant communion with the Father of Spirits, should have a thousand things to tell us of that sacred intimacy, so real and all-pervading. But perhaps the very sacredness of the intercourse which makes the soul shy of its own deepest feelings, leads a man to take refuge in a mode of expression constantly repeated and accepted by so many as the only language for such experiences, which is indeed conventional beyond description, and as little life-giving as any commonplace utterance could be. On his last day on earth, Chalmers, musing in his garden, softly walking like Isaac among the flowers in the evening quiet, was heard murmuring to himself, “Father, my heavenly Father”. There is more to ourselves in this murmur than in the many pages of abstract piety which in the form of journals and letters fill so great a part of the volumes which contain the record of his life.’²

¹ Mrs. Oliphant, *Thomas Chalmers*, p. 6.

² *Ibid.*, p. 249.

The expression that the soul is leaving consciousness must not always be understood literally. It is not always a case of trance but of a bliss which the intercourse with God gives to both mystics and the disciples of the Prophets and the Gospel. Philo writes:

'If a yearning come upon thee, O soul, to possess the good, which is Divine, forsake not only thy "country", the body, and thy "kindred", the sense-life, and thy "father's house", the reason, but flee from thyself, and depart out of thyself, in a Divine madness of prophetic inspiration, as those possessed with Corybantic frenzy. For that high lot becomes thine when the understanding is rapt in ecstasy, feverishly agitated with a heavenly passion, beside itself, driven by the power of him who is True Being, drawn upwards towards him, while truth leads the way.'¹

Time and space vanish without the consciousness being lessened or weakened. 'In fact much of our higher life is timeless and spaceless; it is not only in ecstasy that we rise beyond these forms of thought.'²

Tor Andrae employs the term ecstasy as signifying a quite definite phenomenon. In the essentials we agree with his opinion. But one may be in doubt as to the terminology. Seeing, blissful seeing, would perhaps be a better term. The affinity of the mystic's apprehension of God with the intellectual seeing of the philosophers has often been accentuated. No wonder.

'Goethe observes that there is a difference between seeing and seeing, "*zwischen Sehen und Sehen*". There is one seeing with the "spiritual eyes" and one seeing with the eyes of the body. . . . On this point he has partly been followed by Wilhelm von Humboldt and Schleiermacher. Like Goethe, Humboldt knows "the immediate encroachment of the idea upon the real, this true seeing of the spirit in the body". . . . Schleiermacher also speaks of a "talent for seeing" and defines once explicitly "*Erkennen-Sehen*", knowing-seeing. This seeing exists in Fichte's intellectual "*Anschauung*" in his anti-rationalistic period and with the same meaning in Schelling, e.g. in *Bruno*. For this intellectual *Anschauung* implies "the faculty of seeing the universal

¹ Philo, *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres sit*, 69 sq.; cf. Kennedy, *Philo's Contribution to Religion*, p. 16.

² Inge, *The Church in the World*, p. 199.

in the special, the infinite in the finite, both united to a living unity".¹

'We may regard the seeing of the religious man as a television without object or form. The gaze is not directed towards a definite object, it does not stop at a beautiful or ugly form, but goes into the indefinite and infinite distance. Heaven and earth have become indifferent and valueless. No excitements, no checking or promoting influences issue from the world of objects. The world has sunk into nothing. The eye beholds only the distance. The religious categories of infinity and eternity, the defined feelings of subjection and contempt and hate of the world have sprung forth spontaneously from this television.'²

Man draws nigh to God and gets to know the divine by *faith* and *thought*. Faith and thought are the approach of man to know God.

I

Faith has already decided the main thing. God is embraced by faith, trust, under the symbol of personality. All utterances concerning God are necessarily imperfect and approximate, but, as Auguste Sabatier in his exposition of the symbolical character of theological and religious language points out, they strive to get as near to the matter as possible. There is an essential difference in those cases where they are derived from the personal life and those where they can be traced to impersonal existence. In the former case, when the conception of God finds expression in terms of human emotional life, one can either keep to the highest personal human connexions, to spiritual relations, to the highest expressions of the moral and personal life, or else the language, and especially that of mysticism, derives its expressions from the lower instincts of man, amorousness and other less personal functions. Confidence, trust, and love can only occur as between one person and another. Thus God is comprehended by faith as Will, Love, and Action.

One exception might be named, Epicurus and his Christian followers, Molinos and others. Theirs is a high and pure religion where the deity presents an ideal picture for men to

¹ Schultz, *Über die Struktur des religiösen, künstlerischen und philosophischen Sehens*, col. 571 sq.

² Ibid., col. 572.

regard and imitate, without any possibility of fellowship with God or of divine interference in the life of man or the course of the world.

However, the love of man, as a rule, is the answering echo of the love which first loved us. Faith lays hold of God or, rather, faith is laid hold of by God. Faith is an act of the soul so far-reaching, having such an incomprehensible object, so deep and so manifold that language fails. The heroes of faith pile one expression upon another. The strongest words and similes are employed to say what it is to trust in the Eternal and the Loving One. The heart receives God into itself. A union takes place. Religion speaks of God for us and God in us but equally of us in God. They shall be in the Father as Christ is in the Father.

'Christ is full of grace, life, and bliss; the soul is full of sins, death, and damnation. Let faith come between: then Christ will take the sins, the death and the hell, and grace, life, and bliss will belong to the soul; for being the bridegroom he ought to receive at once what the bride possesses and let the bride share in his own belongings.'

Words cannot express how intimate this union is. No one can fully interpret it.² Faith is a mystery not only because its object, God, stands above all human thought, conception, and comprehension, but also because the experience of the believer himself transcends the resources of language. Trust and the inevitable consequence and expression of trust, the prayer of the heart, are properly found in revealed religion and in the piety of Ishvara. The enhancement of religion and faith to a strong intensity, to an all-dominating perception of the incomprehensible power and grace of God, is usually called mysticism. For reason is unable to proceed further in search of an explanation. Mysticism emphasizes the union, the intimacy of fellowship. The classics of our evangelic dogma speak of a *unio mystica* which the believer can at times experience, which is always present as long as the soul lives in God and which, beyond death, shall reveal all its feeling and bliss. When the soul receives the benediction of such an experience, it is aware of nothing but God. But he suffices.

¹ Luther, *De Libertate Christiana*, pp. 54-5.

² Cf. Inge, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

He is all. He is infinitely more than anything else. The seeking and believing soul covets in his faith nothing less than God himself. Faith is not satisfied with any gift of grace whatsoever. It desires to own the Giver, God himself.

If we should try to tell what men of faith in all ages have said and sung of the bliss of faith and perfect trust, there would be no end. Listen to St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans:

‘Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’¹

No one has described and praised the bliss of faith more beautifully or in stronger tones than Luther.

‘He who thinks he has a merciful master and a father, ought he not to rejoice and be merry, yes, blast his way through rocks of copper and hardships of every kind with a bold and invincible spirit. Ought he not to think that all is honey, milk, and wine? *iam non mortalis amplius, sed sempiternam vitam vivens.*’ ‘Where the forgiveness of sins is, there is also life and bliss.’

But there is much to disturb the soul’s rest in God—hindrances without and within. When the trust and love of the heart are fixed on God, there are always or nearly always in the soul, at the same time, counter-movements to disturb the harmony. Joy is disturbed by the rising up of a smarting unrest. The confidence and security of faith are undermined. Evil and darkness which in some unsearchable manner are woven in the web of existence, and in the heart of man, appear in the shape of accusations for the past and sorrow for the irrevocable. Trust is buffeted by contrary winds. There is no whole and unblended happiness, no bliss.

¹ Rom. viii. 35-9.

Very occasionally a miracle happens. No human power can call forth the ecstasy, the blissful 'seeing', or whatever we may call it, which we now refer to. Vigilance and prayer are always needed. And exercise, the hygiene of the soul, the training for the spiritual life, must not be neglected. The care and methodical fostering of our inner life has been too often overlooked and neglected by evangelical piety. True, this is a consequence of its ideality, but there have been harmful effects. Still, no psychological method and no training can accomplish the bliss of confidence and the fellowship of God. For this is not to be achieved by any sudden action, it is no effect of outward or inward means employed by man; it comes of itself. It is an effect of the spirit in us, an effect beyond our power to control.

All the rushing streams and counter-streams of the soul are now turned in the same direction and grow calm. Is it possible? Otherwise, our inner experience is sundered; it is not uniform. What we call the best moments of the soul are in their purity so rare that we ought to employ a lofty and solitary word for that state. For the moment resistance is broken down or removed. The river-bed and the current are one and the same. The spirit of man is borne tranquilly forward on the river of bliss. He is seized with irresistible rapture, unopposed from any quarter. His state becomes monoïdeistic. It is governed by a single thought, a single feeling, a single conception--the incomprehensible grace and power of God. The soul is overwhelmed by this one certainty—God is near. Such a moment is regarded as a foretaste of the eternal peace--if the eternal peace beyond can really be in all its course so complete, so undisturbed by memories, fears, and pain as the soon-counted moments and times of bliss in a human life.

I take an example from Japan and the first years of this century. Ryōsen Tsunashima was a rationalist but became a Christian in sympathy with Oriental mysticism.

'He was never content with mere contemplation but desired a personal realization of divine light. Finally he attained an

intimate contact with divinity, in which he realized the ecstatic joy of a religious life, but when he reached this climax he was a sick man, and his last days were devoted to imparting the delight of his mystic experiences to others in talk and writing. He describes his experience thus:

‘“Ah! That was indeed a serene night! I was writing something with my pen, by the light of a lamp. I cannot now know what was the commotion of my mind, but sudden and instantaneous was the change. In a moment myself had become a self which was no more my former self. The motion of the pen, the sound of writing on the paper, each and all, being transformed into an absolutely brand-new and unimaginable in terms of anything else, became an illumination before the eyes. This lasted only a few minutes, as I thought; yet beyond all words and descriptions was the invading consciousness for the time, something like a shock, or a bewilderment, or a rapture, as if I had met face to face a spiritual living being—a great being majestically arising out of the deep and serene abyss of infinity. . . .

‘“In this way I have met God, seen God. To say *meet* or *see* is still too superficial and external to exhaust the consciousness of that moment. It was a confluence, a union of me with God; at that moment I myself became almost melted away into the reality of God. I became God. Thanks are due for that, direct and straight from God, this amazing and surprising consciousness has been given me.”’¹

3

The idea of God is at first discursive, like all our mental activity. It is concerned with statements and counter-statements. It ascertains, it eliminates, it strives after and wins greater knowledge by removing that which is irrelevant or conceals the view. But the activities of the mind cannot lay hold of God. This holds good of all reality. Only the other day I read that our brain is too imperfectly constructed to comprehend the elementary conceptions of scientific research, ether, molecules, electrons, &c. This holds good of all reality and, first and last, of the highest reality, God. The exertions of the mind issue, when they are carried to a conclusion, in gazing, in adoration. This beholding cannot be appropriated by man himself. He cannot by his exertions

¹ Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, pp. 381-2.

make sure of seeing. It is a gift. 'He whom he chooses, he alone can comprehend Him.'¹ What the Kathaka Upanishad writes of Atman Brahman is valid to this day concerning the blissful seeing as well as of every synthetic intuition into God's being and work, be it flashlike or permanent. The classical example is supplied by St. Augustine in his *Confessions*. With a clearness and simplicity almost unique in literature, he describes how he sat with his mother Monica at Ostia and passed through the worlds up to the throne of God.²

Faith implies a union rather than a unity. The mind seeks and finds. When both are directed towards God, both issue in a 'seeing'.

Both faith and the mind can fulfil their purpose without ecstasy. Finer and greater than ecstatic bliss is the *quand même*, 'for a' that', of faith, the confidence which endures in spite of all.

1. We have mentioned one characteristic of this bliss of faith and insight. It cannot be accomplished by man. We will add a few others.

2. The spirit is wide awake. Consciousness is not dimmed; still less are its boundaries passed. There is no transition to the world of dream and trance. Consciousness is not lost but sharpened. It becomes centred and intuitive. No hypnotic phenomenon is present or need be present. For the passing of the soul out of the light of consciousness into a twilight where observation and memory are non-existent, the words trance and ecstasy have been employed. But the state we have in mind is quite distinct from every kind of trance. Man is himself. He sees and knows clearly. Yet, he is not himself, for he is entirely held and occupied by the eternal Spirit. Here we must have recourse to the psychological triple division of man used by the Bible and St. Paul. Under the individual self of the soul and body which must be overcome and lost, there lies the deep inner ego, the image of God, the spirit, the spirit of man which, saved and purified, gains its life in the eternal spirit. His inner man becomes transfigured. Concerning this perfection of faith, this perfect rest of the soul in God, the Evangelic dogmatists employed the

¹ Kathaka Upanishad, ii. 23.

² St. Augustine, *Confessions*, ix. 10.

expression *unio mystica*, the mystical union with God. This agrees with the earlier usage of the mystics. St. Paul did not know whether he was in the body or out of it. He heard the ineffable words and remembers how the whole thing happened. He preserved it as a holy secret between God and himself until his heart, sore with the unscrupulousness of the Corinthians and his own burning love towards them, compelled him to reveal the secret.

Such an experience is not bound to occur in a Christian's life. He can be true to his Master and live secure, trusting to the forgiveness of his sins. Yes, he may be an example of pure and unselfish faith and willing loyalty in his vocation, without once in his life having tasted bliss. It is therefore dangerous to exaggerate the importance of states of the soul of that kind. But when they occur, they form part of the dispensation of God and should be accepted with gratitude.

3. Bliss, ecstasy, has significance for the life. In all the genuine mystics we find a line of demarcation between those blissful and peculiar religious states which are followed by a reaction, an emptiness, a weariness, a relaxation of love and loyalty and readiness to sacrifice, and those which have a supporting, encouraging, and strengthening effect on the Christian life of a man.

"The mystics themselves are fully aware of the importance of the distinction. Ecstasies, no less than visions and voices, must, they declare, be subjected to unsparing criticism before they are recognized as divine: whilst some are undoubtedly "of God", others are no less clearly "of the devil". "The great doctors of the mystic life", says Malaval, "teach that there are two sorts of rapture, which must be carefully distinguished. The first are produced in persons but little advanced in the Way, and still full of selfhood; either by the force of a heated imagination which vividly apprehends a sensible object, or by the artifice of the Devil. These are the raptures which St. Teresa calls, in various parts of her works, Raptures of Feminine Weakness. The other sort of Rapture is, on the contrary, the effect of pure intellectual vision in those who have a great and generous love for God. To generous souls who have utterly renounced themselves, God never fails in these raptures to communicate high things."

'All the mystics agree with Malaval in finding the test of a true

ecstasy, not in its outward sign, but in its inward grace, its after-value: and here psychology would do well to follow their example. The ecstatic states, which are supreme instances of the close connection between body and soul, have bodily as well as mental results: and those results are as different and as characteristic as those observed in healthy and in morbid organic processes. If the concentration has been upon the highest centre of consciousness, the organ of spiritual perception—if a door has really been opened by which the self has escaped for an instant to the vision of 'That Which Is'—the ecstasy will be good for life. The entrancement of disease, on the contrary, is always bad for life.²

Blissful ecstasy, in the sense in which we have employed the word, is not followed by any reaction. For here there is no question of an exaltation to be followed by a depression in accordance with the law of the organism. Even an exaltation of this latter kind can be of extraordinary significance for artistic creation and the life of man in general, although regarded by the medical profession as a pathological state.

'Give me a dose, sir, that may make me sevenfold worse to-morrow, but puts me on my feet to-day.'² We must not make a wrong use of the truth expressed in Runeberg's words. Such an example can be easily pointed to by him who has grown accustomed to excite himself with spiritual or material irritants for various tasks. But the ecstasy of bliss does not belong to this group of phenomena. It does not manifest itself in a rhythmical undulation; it comes, no one knows how or whence, on very rare occasions. When it is bestowed, it collects the mind and strengthens the will. Faith is sealed and the soul enjoys a spiritual purification.

4. A further characteristic of the bliss of seeing or ecstasy is that it yields no further knowledge. It differs from what we call intuition and inspiration in not solving any riddles or problems. It does not widen the intellectual sphere. But what man has hitherto only learned or known theoretically, becomes real and tangible in the ecstasy of bliss. The knowledge which had been hitherto latent now manifests itself irresistibly and proves its power, so that a man reckons with it in a new way. The content of faith gains new reality. Trust

¹ Underhill, *op. cit.*, pp. 361-2.

² Runeberg, *Döbeln vid Jutas*, p. 79.

itself obtains a new earnestness. This blissful state might be called a 'seeing'. In employing the word *ecstasy*, we chiefly think of the happy feeling in the mind. In employing the word 'seeing', we think rather of the content. 'Seeing' is the perfection of faith but, at the same time, the summit of the line of thought when the mind is striving up to God. Faith shall be lost in sight. Such is the universal hope of revealed religion. 'This change will only take place after the redemption from the limitations of earthly life. A foretaste may, however, be vouchsafed to the believer even here on earth.

5. It is a matter of indifference whether the *ecstasy* is accompanied by unusual psychological phenomena, visions, auditory hallucinations, photisms, and the like. This does happen. But great errors have been committed in the study of psychology in general, and still more within the sphere of religious psychology and religious views, especially in primitive and violent religious revivals, when decisive importance has been attached to such extraordinary phenomena of the soul. They are due neither to vigour of faith or mind, nor to the earnestness of the blissful *ecstasy*, but to a peculiarity in the organism of man.

'Such *ecstasy* as this, so far as its physical symptoms go, is not of course the peculiar privilege of the mystics. It is an abnormal bodily state, caused by a psychic state; and this causal psychic state may be healthy or unhealthy, the result of genius or disease. It is common in the little understood type of personality called "sensitive" or mediumistic; it is a well-known symptom of certain mental and nervous illnesses. A feeble mind concentrated on one idea—like a hypnotic subject gazing at one spot—easily becomes entranced; however trivial the idea which gained possession of his consciousness. Apart from its content, then, *ecstasy* carries no guarantee of spiritual value. It merely indicates the presence of certain abnormal psycho-physical conditions: an alteration of the normal equilibrium, a shifting of the threshold of consciousness, which leaves the body, and the whole usual 'external world' outside instead of inside the conscious field, and even affects those physical functions—such as breathing—which are almost entirely automatic. Thus *ecstasy*, physically considered, may occur in any person in whom (i) the threshold of consciousness is exceptionally mobile and (ii) there is a tendency to dwell

upon one governing idea or intuition. Its worth depends entirely on the objective value of that idea or intuition.¹

6. Some minds are so constituted that they more easily experience a foretaste of the blissful perfection of faith. A learned clergyman in my diocese has long felt himself drawn to Emanuel Swedenborg. I do not know any one who is more familiar with the writings and views of the great scientist and seer of visions. The reason, of which he himself was hardly fully aware, came out in a confidential talk. Ever since his young days this clergyman had enjoyed ecstatic experiences. He does not fall into a trance nor does he lose consciousness; but without any exercise or preparations whatever, except what lies in a life of piety and devotion to duty, he sometimes falls into a state which might be called bliss. I have ascertained that he has not told this secret, which is very precious to himself, to even his closest friends. He does not practise beforehand any meditation or concentration. He may be thinking of spiritual and eternal things and then, quietly and suddenly, his attention is entirely absorbed. True, he sees what goes on around him. But he walks or sits as in a dream. His spirit communes with God. An unspeakable sense of peace spreads over all his being. All anxiety, all unrest, even the remembrance of his daily duties, are vanished. The outward senses and their perceptions cannot captivate or distract his soul. His spirit moves delightfully on the ocean of eternity. Other persons, even those who associate with him every day, are little aware of this peculiarity, for one reason because this blissful state almost always comes to him when he is alone. There are long periods when this quiet rapture never comes over him. It has never occurred to him to strive after it or to do anything to put himself into such a state. He regards it as a benediction, a gift which fills him with gratitude, but which his Christian faith and life are able to dispense with.

This blissful state can fall upon him when he is sitting at his desk. Then he ceases to read and write. He feels no psychical or physical peculiarity. He is far too busy with spiritual things to pay attention to his state or to analyse it.

¹ Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

It has also happened that the same blissful state has suffused his being when he has been walking along the road. Then he calmly continues his walk. He enjoys the divine gift as long as it lasts, knowing that it will soon be gone. It is not followed by any feeling of emptiness. This state lasts at the very most for half an hour. Usually it is shorter. I asked him what it was that he perceived then. He found it difficult to reply. He obtains no addition to his knowledge. He beholds the eternal, but no figure of God or the Saviour appears before his eyes. Existence grows rich and full, but in a measure he verifies the words of St. Paul that what he experiences is unspeakable. Yet he has had no experience whatever of a violent or ecstatic character. Rapture is perhaps a misleading word. Bliss and peace express the matter better.

I asked him if this peculiar experience of his had any significance for his faith and life. He answered, 'No'. His faith in God through Christ is independent of these blissful moments. 'But', he added, 'this experience of mine has made me yet more assured of the eternal life.' At these moments he is really beyond time, living the eternal life. One might say that his faith and trust are thus occasionally lost in sight and bliss.

Such an indescribable blissful feeling can be attained also without any religious impulse.

'When Buddha has told how his endeavours to reach a super-sensual wisdom had failed he continues: "Then I remembered that once at home during the work in the fields I was sitting in the shade of a rose-apple-tree, free from longing, free from all misery, in blissful, quiet meditation." This trait is woven into a dogmatic system and it is made the first link in a chain of experiences which ends with the great discovery, but it is in its naïve simplicity as though it were taken straight out of the half-brooding, half-dreaming play with which the young man is preparing himself for life. And the breaking-through of Buddha is a new perception of that restful confidence, deepened through the man's painfully won experience.'¹

What we are speaking of is by no means the special privilege of certain mystics. The psychology of conversion, faith,

¹ Grønbech, *Mystikere i Europa og Indien*, i, p. 142.

justification, and adoption embraces the category of bliss as much as mysticism does, and with equal right.

A Christian life can be as deeply rooted, established, and valuable without any extraordinary experiences, and we must not shut our eyes to the risk which underlies all rapture and ecstasy. Paul Elmer More writes of this:

'And with the elimination of metaphysics and pantheism the practice of religion is saved from one and the other form of mysticism, whether it be the effort of a soul to lose itself in some ultimate negation of the reason or to forget its own personality in ecstatic union with God. No doubt to some straining spirits this limitation will appear a weakness rather than a strength, a derogation at once from the majesty of God and the dignity of man. Whether they be right or wrong, this, at least, ought to be recognized as the special note of Platonism, that it can rise to a high level of spiritual contemplation without abandoning the sense of distinctions. And I for my part, weighing as well as I can the records of the religious life in the Orient and the Occident, am persuaded that pantheism and metaphysics are a perversion of spiritual truth which can be explained by just that difficulty of maintaining distinctions in the dizzy flight of the soul upwards. I have come to believe, moreover, that the way of mysticism, even when it denotes a genuine effort of the spirit and however fine its fruits may appear (for there is also a bastard mysticism of the senses which masquerades as spirituality), is a way perilous to the soul's health and misses still at the end the balance and measure and steadfastness, the tranquil happiness in a word, of a sounder religious experience.'¹

But the extraordinary and uncommon has its place in religion too. Maybe people lose their times of visitation by not allowing the soul to enjoy solitude with God in vigil and prayer. Go into thy chamber and shut thy door. Leonardo da Vinci wrote: '*Se tu serai solo, tu serai tutto tuo*: when you are alone, you belong wholly to yourself.' The sentence would be truer in this form: 'When you are alone, you belong wholly to God.'

IV

The positive form of meditation and concentration is the characteristic one in the West, particularly for Christian

¹ More, *The Religion of Plato*, pp. 312-13.

faith and mysticism. At certain moments God claims the whole attention of the believer. Even if he desired it ever so much, he could not think of anything else. He knows nothing else. He perceives nothing else. In another connexion we shall speak of God's activity which manifests itself at various times and places in the history of the race, in a manner which may be irrational and offensive to the human mind. Nothing in the history of religion has had such power as the cross of Christ to captivate the mind of man so that all else is forgotten.

Thus, to some extent, the difference of method, *via negativa* or *negationis* and *via positiva* or *positionis*, coincides with different views of the divine. If the divine can be determined only by eliminating all that is not God we reach at last something impersonal, negative. Even then, to be sure, man can perceive something of the power of the Eternal, but he comprehends nothing, and a religious dogma of that kind in a Shankara or others is shy of the symbol of personality. At best it is regarded as a lower conception, necessary for the crowd and, perchance, for the enlightened also when he is in need of divine help. *Via negationis* points to an impersonal conception of God.

In the positive way of salvation, on the other hand, God is mainly active and overwhelming. If the Buddhist chain, since its secret has been unveiled by Heiler, displays a typical proof of a negative preparation, the *ordo salutis* of evangelic theology is dominated by the other point of view. God is active, man is receptive. He is led from one state to another or, rather, in the fellowship of God his distinctions are lost. On penetrating to that which underlies awakening, enlightenment, justification, regeneration, sanctification and the mystical union, we find that the glowing heat of God's love melts all together. It becomes rather the attempt of the imperfect human understanding to comprehend the various sides of the activity of God than a methodical training of the soul to attain to different states and experiences on its path.

When meditation and contemplation in ascetic mysticism, for psychological reasons, need an object, it is sought arbitrarily or by purely psychological methods. It is not derived

from the revelation of God, nor from history, nor from the world of thought. It may be the sacred syllable *OM* which is repeated and meditated on, or it may be the navel, or a point between the eyebrows at which the eyes stare in order to transport the soul from the everyday round of life into the coveted ecstasy or trance. The emotions play a greater part in mysticism than in the religion of revelation. The subjective becomes more important. In revealed religion, in the gospel, the objective is the main thing: the Cross, the works of God, the words of the Saviour. Here exercise does not need to seek an object for attention in the armoury of psychology. The object is given by history. Meditation rests on the words and life of Christ. The most important target for attention is the Cross of the Saviour or the host changed into deity.

It will be simplest, perhaps, to employ the term bliss, the bliss of faith, the bliss of *unio mystica*, for this state which is unattainable by training or by human art. It is the bliss of divine fellowship when the soul obtains an inkling of what is meant by the perfecting of faith in sight, a time when God visits the soul with his grace.

But, alas, when God draws nigh to man, the normal state of man is far from being one of bliss. God is a consuming fire. And in man there is much to be burnt away.

III

RELIGION AS PSYCHOLOGY. JINISM AND HINAYANA

ALL was ready for taking the step. The Veda gods were no more able to help man. They could not inspire the educated classes either with fear or with awe, and their contempt for them spread farther and farther. There was not a god in a religious sense any more. For who is God? St. Augustine answers: *Tu creasti nos ad te, et cor nostrum inquietum est donec requiescat in te.*¹ India had not such a god any more. Luther answers in the Great Catechism with the best religious definition of God that I know: 'A God is that whereto we are to look for all good and to take refuge in all distress; so that to have a God is to trust and believe him from the whole heart; as I have often said that the confidence and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol.'² Pehr Eklund, the late Dean of Lund, answered with a universal definition, valid for all religion, even for the atheistic Hinayana: 'God is the one who helps us from the worst evil to the highest good.'

The step was taken by the heretical monastic orders in the sixth century before Christ. Two of them became lasting and obtained an importance. The Jina Order for India's religious history, the Buddha Order for Asia's and the world's history. The god is unnecessary. Nobody cares about calling the existence of the Veda gods in question. They lack any importance for salvation. Even the highest god, the unity of all, Atman Brahman, is unnecessary. The ascetic saves himself. The near connexion between those heretical monastic orders and Yoga are witnessed by their having taken the word *Nirvana*, extinction, to denote the aim of salvation.

Those two orders are so much alike, that even Auguste Barth could write in his incomparable handbook, *The Religions of India* (p. 42):

'Viewed as a whole, Jainism is so exact a reproduction of

¹ St. Augustine, *Confessions*, i. 1.

² Jacobs, *Book of Concord*, p. 391.

Buddhism that we have considerable difficulty in accounting for both their long-continued existence by each other's side, and the cordial hatred which seems always to have separated them. The Jains are the followers of *Jina*, the "victorious", as the Bauddhas are of Buddha, the "awakened" one.'

Thanks to Hoernle, Bloomfield, von Glasclapp, Schubring, Charpentier, Guérinot, and others, we now know more about Jinism.

Buddha's older contemporary, Mahavira, was the son of a petty chief—with the same name as Buddha, Siddhartha—in a suburb of Vaisali, and he was on his mother's side related to the wife of Bimbisara the king of Magadha. Bimbisara conquered Vaisali and laid the foundation of the empire which was to become the biggest national empire of India.

Mahavira's proper name was Vardhamana. The Buddhists call him Nataputta, 'the son of Nata', or Naya, the name of the noble family to which he belonged. On the death of his parents the twenty-eight-year-old Vardhamana devoted himself entirely to the welfare of the soul, lived as an ascetic, and soon carried this so far that he walked about quite naked. Later on this became a main point in the rules of his order. Vardhamana became famous, gained followers, and was, as other champions of piety and even Siddhartha of the Sakya family, honoured with glorious names such as Jina, 'the conqueror', Mahavira, 'the great hero', and other distinguishing titles. His attainment of Nirvana happened in Pava in the Patna district in the second half of the sixth century before Christ. He is said to have reached the age of seventy-two years. The dates of his birth and his death are, according to tradition, 599 and 527 B.C.

In Jinism the connexion between the monks and the laity was stronger than in Buddhism. But Buddhism had an incomparably greater unity in the doctrinal system.

The pride of Jinism throughout the ages has been a severe asceticism. Mrs. Stevenson writes:

'The Jaina says that one of Mahavira's great messages to the human race was that man could attain salvation through his own efforts independently of Brahmanic aid. Unlike Buddha, he laid the greatest stress on asceticism as a means towards

attaining that end, and Jainism has proved the forerunner of much of the most revolting asceticism current in the India of to-day. It has been said that as knowledge is wisdom to the Brahman, and purity and love to the Buddhist, so is asceticism wisdom to the Jaina.¹

Mahavira built on a foundation already laid. He seems at first to have joined a monastic order, which was founded 250 years before by Parsvanatha, the Nirgranthas, 'those who are delivered from all bonds', but he does not seem to have found their asceticism severe enough for his need. He was content with nothing less than entire nakedness as a rule, from which only certain necessary exceptions were permitted, and he evidently succeeded in finding sympathy amongst the majority of the Nirgrantha monks for this stupid claim.

A difference from the Buddhists lies already in what has just been mentioned. On the whole, the Jina sect is much more ascetic. Mahavira did not, like Buddha, lose the confidence in the value of fasting and mortifications. On the contrary: even the nakedness witnesses to this. It is especially meritorious to starve oneself to death, when the time has come. The writings praise and describe this art of death. The ideal career of an Upasaka, a member of the lay congregation, is described as follows: Piety after the rules throughout twenty years, abstention from food throughout one month, hereupon, after death by starvation, four periods in the Sohamma-heaven and perfection in the big Videha country.

It is true that the holy writings of Jainism warn against self-conceit. About meditation, *dhyana*, we read:

"There are two bad ways of meditation which a monk is bound to renounce, i.e. walling for the dead and remembering with anger any personal injuries he may have suffered. He is, however, bound to meditate in the good ways, by being absorbed in religious thought, and by being so freed from earthly thoughts as to be able to think of spiritual things."²

But the Jina monks have in fact surpassed most ascetics in unnaturalness and vanity of asceticism. It belongs to

¹ Stevenson, *Notes on Modern Jainism*, p. 23.

² Ibid., p. 36.

Mahavira's greatness that he abstained from taking care of his body. He was as indifferent to the smell of sandal wood as to that of dirt, to straw as to jewels, to dirt as to gold, to joy as to pain, bound neither by this world nor by the other, wanting neither life nor death, arrived at the other shore of *samsara*, and he strained himself for the suppressing of seduction, of the *karma*. The night in which he died was illumined by many gods, who stepped up and down.¹ But you must not trust in the deceitful power of the gods, but save yourself.

To the rules belong:

When crawling animals, or animals which live in the height or on the ground, feed on his flesh and blood, he must neither kill them nor rub (the wound). Even if those animals spoil his body, he must not move out of his position.² The gods love such an ascetic.

The cult of dirt and uncleanness has also in the West its examples, repulsive to us but admired at the time. We remember the pious amazement of the monks, when the murdered Thomas à Becket's clothes were taken from his body, and they perceived the crawling crowd of insects on his body. They had not known that he was as holy as that.

Cardinal Bellarmine answered with scholastic exactitude the question whether one is allowed to kill the vermin on the body, which the medieval mystics, often sublime in their philosophy, had denied. The cardinal said that they ought to be permitted to bite undisturbed, for man had got eternal happiness, but they only this life. One may contrast the Avesta, where it is a pious and meritorious work, used also as a penance, to kill obnoxious insects and other evil animals, or the Book of Daniel, where long hair and long nails, the pride of ascetic Hindu holiness, are considered as belonging to the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar: 'till his hair was grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.'³

The severe asceticism, with the prohibition directly or indirectly to kill anything living among the plants or the animals, removed the partisans of the Jina Order from all

¹ Kalpa-Sutra, pp. 116 sqq.

² Ayaranga-Sutta, i. 8.

³ Dan. iv. 33.

productive professions. They were restricted to money and business, which has been advantageous for the purse of the order but hardly for their reputation among India's people.

It was the privilege of Buddhism to give to self-salvation a nobler form. One may presume that Buddhism has a relation to Samkhya, since this doctrine does not need a divinity, the difference being merely that the many souls of Samkhya lost in Buddhism their property of substantiality and became a series of states.

H. Oldenberg¹ has shown, however, that the most ancient Buddhism scarcely displays direct loans from Samkhya, apart from such general Indian similarities as the term Nirvana or the four topics, often called the Four Truths.

'All Indian philosophical systems professed to be doctrines of Salvation. They therefore start from the conception of a whole (*sarvam*) which is then split in two halves, Phenomenal life and the Absolute (*saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*). The phenomenal part is further divided into an analysis of its actual condition (*duḥkha*), its driving forces (*duḥkha-samudaya*), and their gradual extinction (*mārga*). When this extinction (*nirodha*) is reached, life merges into the Absolute about whose essence a variety of constructions exist. These four topics—the four "noble truths", as the term has been very inadequately translated and represented as a fundamental principle of Buddhism,—contain, in reality, no doctrine at all. It is only a scheme for philosophical constructions and is accepted as such by all Indian systems without exception.'²

Certain differences are all-pervading, though they were somewhat exaggerated by Max Müller, when he wrote: 'We have looked in vain for any definite similarities between the system of Kapila, as known to us in the Samkhyasutras, and the Abhidharma or the metaphysics of the Buddhists.'³

The background of Buddhism must, however, be sought in Samkhya,⁴ a Samkhya, of course, which had shape but was not yet a completely formed system. Generally speaking, there are many likenesses between the orthodox schools, i.e. those which are loyal to the Veda, and the heterodox

¹ Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden*, p. 314.

² Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*, pp. 54-5.

³ Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, i, p. 226.

⁴ Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

schools of thought in India at that time. They moved in the same spiritual world and to a large extent made use of the same language.

From Yoga, too, a good deal has been taken over, even if we cannot, with Sénart, regard Buddhism as a branch of Yoga.¹ Both display the series characteristic of all ascetic mysticism: first, upright dealing or morality, then, as a higher stage, meditation, concentration, and, thirdly, insight, 'seeing'. Truly, ordinary human honour is a good introduction, we ought to be able to say a necessary one, to self-salvation as well as to fellowship with the living God.

The ascetic exercises of Yoga have, to some extent, been taken over by Buddhism. In the Buddha legend and elsewhere, Yoga occurs at the stages of mental absorption.

When Siddhartha, the young prince, in the prime of his life and his fortune, sought redemption from the misery of the world, he naturally turned to those who gave instruction concerning the path to salvation. He turned to two teachers, Alara and Udaka, belonging by tradition to the Samkhya school. In spite of his rapid progress, for which he gained their flattering notice, he yet obtained no peace. The time-honoured Jnana marga did not help him. From philosophy he turned to ascetic exercises. This took place at Uruvela, on the river Neranjara. Five hermits, ascetics, who sojourned in the same wood, saw with admiration how he fasted, held his breath and was absorbed in self-contemplation. He himself, however, felt strange pains and the approach of death, but no peace. The later literature has described his self-torture with all the expert competence of the Yogi.

Forgetful of Siddhartha's discovery, Buddhist literature naively exulted in accounts of the Master's exploits in asceticism. Buddhists were also stung by the accusations of sloth brought by rival monastic orders against Buddhism, accusations which never entirely ceased.

All the sources agree that Buddha practised asceticism before he reached the saving insight. But he observed that asceticism did not lead to peace. In Majjhima Nikaya² he relates that, in his experience, violent ascetic exercises

¹ Oldenberg, op. cit., p. 320.

² Cf. Dutoit, *Die dṣṣkaracaryā des Bodhisattva*.

destroy peace of mind, instead of promoting it. 'When I pressed my teeth together, laid my tongue to my palate and suppressed and crushed my reason with my will, the sweat came out from the hollows of my arms. . . . But my strength was alert and unsubdued.' His body was not brought to rest. Then he tried holding his breath. Moreover, he commenced to fast and carried it to extremes, consuming only a handful of beans or peas. This brought extreme weakness. Then the thought came to him: 'I sat while my father Sakka was working, in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree, feeling myself free from lusts and the things which do not lead to salvation.' Then he attained the first blissful stage of ecstasy and found: 'This is the path to a right insight. This happiness is not easy of attainment for him whose body has become so utterly emaciated. Suppose I consumed abundant food, boiled rice and sour rice in water?' He did this, with the consequence that the five monks who had admired him, being now scandalized, took their departure.¹

Even according to this book the ascetic state of Buddha was highly enhanced. He eats the discharge of his own bowels, children pollute him with their water, and he is insulted in other ways. But all this is magnified in the *Lalita Vistara* and *Mahavastu*. There the holy man lives only on a berry. We are given interesting accounts of self-torture according to all the rules of the art.

The monastic order of Buddha was anxious to prove that Buddha was inferior to no one in asceticism, but had outdone all professional self-torturers. He had taken the matter seriously. What it may mean to religion that an older method of salvation has been tried out to the utmost has been demonstrated to us by St. Paul and Luther. As regards Buddha, *Lalita Vistara* itself reveals the cause of the luxuriant increase of the stories of asceticism: Bodhi-sattva gave his wonderful display of asceticism in order to lessen the pride of pious competitors. Arguments were needed against rival orders who charged the Buddhists with self-indulgence.

The Jaina monks scolded the Sakya monks, i.e. the

¹ *Majjhima Nikaya*, iv. 6, 36, 85, 100.

Buddhists:¹ 'They have a soft bed, they drink in the morning on waking, they eat in the midst of the day. They drink in the evening, enjoy wine and sugar at midnight and after all that they prepare their salvation.' Pratimoksha, the formula for the Buddhist confession, opposes the luxurious living of heretics. But Buddha was accused, as our Saviour was later, by the zealots and by worldly men, who always admire asceticism without practising it, of living a self-indulgent life. Therefore the authors of the Buddha legend are most anxious to attribute to him the most exaggerated austerities.

Two motives run throughout the story of Siddhartha's way to the Buddhahood: the new saving insight, namely the experience of the misery and vanity of ordinary human life, which led to the necessity of leaving house and civic duties for the life of the ascetic, and the experience of the failure of time-honoured asceticism to give peace to the soul. But neither in entering upon the path of the monk, nor in repudiating the achievements of the ascetics, did Siddhartha require nor experience the slightest support or advice by a divinity.

Afterwards, when Siddhartha had attained to the saving insight, he could say of Yoga asceticism as the path of salvation in St. Paul's words: 'For we are the circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh: though I myself might have confidence in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more.'²

Luther could certify concerning his monastic experiences that if a man could be saved by a monastic life and ascetic exercises, he was the man.

Buddha succeeded no better than did afterwards St. Paul and Luther. Into the different groups of stories dealing with the temptations of Buddha, there enters quite naturally a series containing the natural ascetic temptation to abandon the whole thing.

We learn that when Siddhartha resolved to leave his home and seek salvation, he at once encountered Mara, the Evil

¹ Minayeff, *Recherches sur le bouddhisme*, p. 48.

² Phil. iii. 3 sq. ; cf. 2 Cor. xi. 18, 22.

One, the Tempter. No juncture could have been more timely for a temptation not to take the decisive step. But the text, in *Nidanakatha* in *Jataka*, betrays its secondary character. At the very moment when a divinity opened the door to Siddhartha on his way out of the palace came Mara, with the intention of persuading the future Buddha (the Bodhisattva, one who is preparing for the Buddhahood) to turn back; and standing in the air, he said: "Sir, go not forth! For on the seventh day from now the wheel of empire will appear to you, and you shall rule over the four great continents and their two thousand attending isles. Sir, turn back!" "Who are you?" "I am Vasavatti (the possessor of power)." "Mara, I knew that the wheel of empire was on the point of appearing to me; but I do not wish for sovereignty. I am about to cause the ten thousand worlds to thunder with my becoming a Buddha." "I shall catch you", thought Mara, "the very first time you have a lustful, malicious or unkind thought! And, like an ever-present shadow, he followed after, ever on the watch for some slip." ¹ 'And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season.'²

The numerous stories about the temptation of Buddha, if carefully analysed, belong to two distinct groups, distinct if we consider their content, but hopelessly mixed in the texts. The first group which occupies us here is formed by temptations common to all ascetics. They must be chiefly placed before the enlightenment but might have also come back later. They are concerned only with Siddhartha's own fate and salvation. The second type of temptation is characteristic for Buddha alone. It could occur only after his discovery of the way to Nirvana. That temptation is concerned with the salvation of Mankind. He was tempted to follow his new insight and enter into Nirvana immediately. The victory over that temptation, the victory of his compassion over his rule and over his individual peace, constitutes in Buddha's own life the foundation of Mahayana and will occupy us later.

Mara, who according to the text just mentioned, lay in wait for Siddhartha after his abandonment of a worldly life,

¹ *Jataka*, i. 63 (271).

² St. Luke, iv. 13.

is next encountered when the hermit sat under the fig-tree, seeking the saving insight. The Evil One was concerned to prevent it, since, during the last seven, or, as some texts say, six years, he had failed to entice or frighten the penitent from his purpose. It is an exciting moment. Will the seeking spirit succeed in gaining the insight that saves? Mara, Namuchi, draws nigh to the hermit on the bank of the river and begins to speak, according to the oldest extant version of this episode, and the one which is the ground of later accounts, viz. *Padhanasutta* in *Sutta-Nipata*. (*Padhana*, 'exertion', is a term which is defined by Windisch as 'the conscious endeavour and struggle, by dominion over the senses and victory over all evil thoughts, to attain to *bodhi*, the highest state of illumination'.)¹ I make use of the rendering of V. Fausböll.²

'1. 'To me, whose mind was intent upon exertion near the river Nerañjarâ, having exerted myself, and given myself to meditation for the sake of acquiring Nibbâna (*yogakkhema*).

'2. Came Namuki speaking words full of compassion "Thou art lean, ill-favoured, death is in thy neighbourhood.

'3. "A thousandth part of thee (is the property) of death, (only) one part (belongs to) life; living life, O thou venerable one, is better; living thou wilt be able to do good works.

'4. "When thou livest a religious life, and feedest the sacrificial fire, manifold good works are woven to thee; what dost thou want with exertion?

'5. "Difficult is the way of exertion, difficult to pass, difficult to enter upon;" saying these verses Mâra stood near Buddha.

'6. To Mâra thus speaking Bhagavat said this: "O thou friend of the indolent, thou wicked one, for what purpose hast thou come here?

'7. "Even the least good work is of no use to me; and what good works are required, Mâra ought to tell.

'8. "I have faith and power, and understanding is found in me; while thus exerting myself, why do you ask me to live?

'9. "This (burning) wind will dry up even the currents of the rivers; should it not by degrees dry up my blood, while I am exerting myself?

'10. "While the blood is drying up, the bile and the phlegm are dried up; while the flesh is wasting away, the mind gets more

¹ Windisch, *Mara und Buddha*, p. 2.

² S.B.E. x, ii, pp. 69 sqq.

tranquil, and my attention, understanding, and meditation get more steadfast.

'11. "While I am living thus, after having felt the extreme sensations, my mind does not look for sensual pleasures; behold a being's purity.

'12. "Lust thy first army is called, discontent thy second, thy third is called hunger and thirst, thy fourth desire.

'13. "Thy fifth is called sloth and drowsiness, thy sixth cowardice, thy seventh doubt, thy eighth hypocrisy and stupor.

'14. "Gain, fame, honour, and what celebrity has been falsely obtained; and he who exalts himself and despises others.

'15. "This, O Namukī, is thine, the black one's fighting army; none but a hero conquers it, and after conquering it obtains joy.

'16. "Woe upon life in this world! death in battle is better for me than that I should live defeated.

'17. "Plunged into this world some Samaṇas and Brāhmaṇas are not seen, and they do not know the way in which the virtuous walk.

'18. "Seeing on all sides an army arrayed, and Māra on his elephant, I am going out to do battle, that he may not drive me away from my place.

'19. "This army of thine, which the world of men and gods cannot conquer, I will crush with understanding as (one crushes) an unbaked earthen pot with a stone.

'20. "Having made my thought subject to me and my attention firm, I shall wander about from kingdom to kingdom, training disciples extensively.

'21. "They (will be) zealous and energetic, executing my orders, (the orders) of one free from lust, and they will go (to the place) where, having gone, they will not mourn."

'22. Māra: "For seven years I followed Bhagavat step by step; I found no fault in the perfectly enlightened, thoughtful (Buddha).

'23. "The crow hovered round the rock that looked like (a lump of) fat: 'Do we here find something soft, is it something sweet?'

'24. "Having obtained nothing sweet there, the crow went away from that spot. Thus like the crow approaching the rock, being disgusted, we shall go away from Gotama."

'25. While overcome with sorrow the string of his lute slipped down; then that evil-minded Yakkha disappeared there."

Siddhartha is steadfast: He enumerates the black tempter's fighting army, 'the black one's fighting army; none but a

hero conquers it and after conquering it obtains joy!' 'Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.'¹

Here Mara appears alone. His army is a figurative expression in the mouth of the Holy One, denoting vices and lusts. But in later texts, in continuation of the recently quoted Nidanakatha, in Lalita Vistara, Mahavastu, and Buddhacharita, it has been clad in flesh and blood—in agreement with older Indian expressions for the host of the death-god—and is described with more and more detail.

Before passing on to see how this enticement to abandon the struggle of the soul is depicted in the extensive Sanskrit biography, Lalita Vistara, I desire as a preliminary to give two pieces of information. In a lecture on Lalita Vistara at the Orientalist Congress in Berlin, Oldenberg showed that this Pali poem, Padhanasutta, translated from Pali into Sanskrit, lay behind part of the story of the temptation which I am just going to quote from Lalita Vistara. Further light has been thrown on this circumstance by Ernst Windisch in his treatise on Mara and Buddha. After printing the two poetic texts, the Pali text, Padhanasutta, and the Sanskrit text from Lalita Vistara side by side in transcription, and after comparing and criticizing them, he gives an improved rendering of the old Pali poem which is common to the two versions.²

In Lalita Vistara and the other late Buddha legends, in addition to endless embellishments, either original or after various models, there appears a new and significant motive, viz. the daughters of Mara. When the tempter fails, he sends his daughters in seductive guise. As Windisch has shown, the oldest extant Pali version, and the one employed by later compilers, is found among the Mara legends in the fourth book of Samyutta Nikaya, the Marasamyutta, under the name of 'the daughters', Dhitaro. By going back to the episode as it is given in Samyuktagama, Ebbe Tuneld has penetrated farther into the problem of the source.³ He presumes

¹ St. Matt. iv. 11.

² Windisch, op. cit., pp. 29 sqq.

³ Tuneld, *Recherches sur la valeur des traditions bouddhiques palie et non-palie*, pp. 97 sqq.

a common origin for Agamasutra and Dhitaro and thus accounts for the similarities in Lalita Vistara and Mahavastu. The daughters of Mara went to their father, and offered to overpower the man by means of the chains of lust. Thereupon, they approached the Holy One and asked to do homage at the feet of the ascetic. But, released as he was, he did not look at them. In vain did they turn themselves into a number of women of various ages. In disappointment they returned to their father who bitterly noted their impotence. In our texts, the daughters of Mara do not appear in this form until after Sambodhi. The episode does not fit in where it is placed.

Siddhartha¹ had been smitten to the soul by the wretchedness of life and the vanity of earthly happiness. In radiant strength of youth and surrounded by all that human desire might call enviable, the noble young man left home, property, wife, children, and kin for the heavy and lonesome lot of the ascetic. 'Though his parents were against it, though they wept and shed tears, he shaved off his hair and beard, dressed in mourning and went from his home to homelessness.' Lalita Vistara lets the temptation assault the Holy One while he is performing the fast and penances which he had undertaken.

First his deceased mother comes from heaven and tenderly urges him to give up his penance and think of his life. 'He comforts her without wavering.' Then comes the assault of Papiyan, another name for Mara. The word *Mara* signifies death, and this spirit of death is, as we have pointed out, at the same time the spirit of lust and covetousness. 'Dear child, one must live, only when living canst thou teach the doctrine and practise it.' But the Holy One unveils the cunning hidden in this feigned benevolence, he calls the Evil One by his right name and denounces all his servants. The sons of the gods now desire to aid the ascetic and endow him with strength by means of food introduced through his pores. But he rejects this pious deception, bravely continuing the struggle of penitence against the claims of his starving body till at last he attains to the insight of the uselessness of

¹ Lalita Vistara, xxi.

violent ascetic exercises. He is not, however, content with the steadfastness he has already shown. By a flash from his eyebrows he illuminates hell, rouses Mara from his reveries and challenges him. All the offspring of evil, in abominable shapes and described with relish by the Indian imagination, now come up. But lo, the Holy One stands calm. All their many missiles, even hills and beams, fire and flames, are changed into garlands of flowers above his head, to heavenly palaces and to a radiant halo around him.

The next in turn are temptations of the flesh. Mara sends his daughters to tempt Bodhisattva by all the arts of refined coquetry, with the thirty-two kinds of female charm. They dance and sing, they bedeck and unveil themselves in the most seductive shapes.

The twenty-first chapter, which comprises the temptation story in *Lalita Vistara*, is beyond all doubt more illuminating as regards Indian taste and imagination than for the course and inner development of Buddha's life.

In a somewhat different and, in part, more original form, 'the book of exertion', *Padhanasutta*, occurs in *Mahavastu*, the Sanskrit work on Buddha published by S nart. After the repelled assaults of Mara, the Holy One abandons his strict asceticism and takes food. We are reminded of Mara's earlier failures. In earlier existences the Holy One, as Bodhisattva, had overcome the Evil One.

In his biography of the master, *Buddhacharita*, Asvagosha has accomplished, with the material available, a more strictly ordered and more attractive composition than the above-mentioned books. Mara sees a menace to his dominion if the Holy One attains to the highest enlightenment. Therefore he urges him to live like a nobleman according to his rank and not like a beggar-monk. To this end he employs all the allurements and menaces at his disposal.

These Mara legends deal with a universal motive, viz. the endeavour of evil to choke the good and to hinder salvation. The motive is a common one. Its basis lies in the difficulties which the great ones of humanity have had to fight against. So complete does Buddhism make the victory of the master that one legend tells the story of the conversion of Mara himself.

Beyond all this, however, there is in these legends something of a different and more definite kind, viz. the temptations of asceticism. In that respect they contain nothing peculiar to Siddhartha. Similar experiences are common to monastic life in all times. They are now concerned with the occasional satisfaction of the instincts, now with the ordered life of the home and community. That the temptation to abandon the ascetic and monastic life is not peculiar to Buddha is confirmed in a most interesting way by a similar legend which, as the result of Oldenberg's investigations must be dated prior to the appearance of Gotama Buddha.¹ Nachiketas was exposed to a similar temptation. The Kathaka Upanishad² says that in the kingdom of the dead, whither he had come, he received permission from Yama, the death-god, to desire three things. In addition to his father's favour on his return from the kingdom of the dead and understanding of the secret doctrine of the sacrificial fire, he desired knowledge concerning the lot of the dead. 'Are they or are they not?' Yama, who is also called Mrityu, death, a name of exactly similar meaning to that we have already met with in the tempter of Gotama, Mara, answers that not even the gods have this knowledge and displays to the gaze of Nachiketas a splendid and enchanting picture of all the glory of life; children and grandchildren, gold, horses, elephants, dominion, wealth, long life, all that man so hardly gains, the most lovely maidens, all will he give to Nachiketas if he will refrain from his question about life after death. Nachiketas replies: What avails all the glory of life? all will soon have perished. Only the desire that penetrates to hidden deeps is the one chosen by Nachiketas. The death-god knows himself vanquished and speaks of the two roads, that of knowledge and that of ignorance. Nachiketas refused to be enticed by desire, but chose the way of insight and of knowledge. The wise man who knows the Only, the Eternal, is released from joy and pain, from right and wrong, from the present and the future.

This poem is a picture of reality in a frame of fancy. Together with the stories already quoted of the temptation of Buddha, it becomes a many-voiced but harmonious witness

¹ Oldenberg, *Buddha*, pp. 54-5.

² Kathaka Upanishad, 1 sqq.

of what in that far-off time was stirring the many hearts troubled by *Weltschmerz*, the pain of the world.

In proportion as the story of the ascetic ideal is intensified, there falls a peculiar light over that part of the temptations which was intended to urge the Holy One to abandon his vehement asceticism. We heard of the endeavour of his mother in Lalita Vistara. A Chinese source makes his father dissuade him from self-torture. In view of this, we must draw the conclusion that Siddhartha, to some extent, succumbed to these temptations, in so far as they referred to exaggerated self-torture. Buddha evidently experienced the usual temptations of the ascetic. I cannot subscribe to the psychology which makes Windisch deny to Buddha the possibility of such temptation because he had just left his home on account of disgust with the pleasures of life. As temptations, however, some of these experiences and mythological scenes are unlikely to have presented themselves to one who had gained an insight into the uselessness of such methods. The ascetic apparatus of temptation in its entirety cannot be in the same degree attributed to Buddha as to professional self-torturers.

Ascetic exercises were of no avail. The more he tortured himself, the further was he from peace.

Then, as we have heard, to the consternation of the hermits, he took food. Yet another negative result had he obtained, the uselessness of asceticism as well as of the speculative doctrine of salvation, to obtain redemption, deeply as his soul demanded it. At long last, as he sat under a fig-tree on the bank of the Neranjara river, he obtained illumination, 'the perfect enlightenment', *sambodhi*. Hence that tree, *Ficus religiosa*, has the name of Bodhi-tree.

In the circumstance that the legend also lets Mahavira gain insight while sitting beside the running water, we may, perhaps, see a loan from the life of Siddhartha. But in many minds both before and after that evening when Siddhartha sat under the fig-tree on the bank of Neranjara, thoughts have grown clearer while eyes have found rest in running water. Among them was St. Ignatius Loyola. He gained illumination while sitting on the bank of the river Llobregar.

Two discoveries or intuitions significant in the history of religion have thus been made when the eyes have gazed down at a river. It was but an accident that both these ascetics discovered a method of salvation. Within the borders of Christianity and the Church one cannot come nearer to self-saving than Loyola did. How can water accomplish such a result? Running water, according to Pascal, is a path that moves. When the mind is at a deadlock, when the senses are fluttering or bewildered, running water can induce an even flow of thought. Sticks and logs float hither and thither on the still water of the lake, but let them pass into the current of a river. They are set moving and carried in one and the same direction. So it is with the inner nature of man. A symphony by one of the great composers has a like effect. Likewise an epic or a drama that really gives a picture of the life of man. No detail can then magnify itself so as to compel our attention.

He who contemplates Nature at large and human life in all its marvellous ways can also, in spite of all visible disorder and confusion, apprehend all the different parts in an orderly onward march. It has been the privilege of a few to write history in that way. What is that clamour and turmoil? Is it history itself? The nations move on through the ages in a bewildering confusion. Figures appear and disappear. All kinds of divisions such as dates, centuries, periods, parties, and groups make some kind of order and aid our survey of events. But what a motley it is! All boundaries coalesce in the ever-surging tide of the nations. What can be the purpose of this hopeless tangle which seems to defy all attempts to order and survey? It means that, from our books and abstractions, we are thrust out into reality itself, into the very multiplicity of History. The great authors of History impart something of the same release to the spirit. The waters of the river, like the symphony of History, Poetry, or Music, though these are dissonant at times, transport us, as it were, into *la durée*, that indivisible flow of events which Bergson deems to be Reality itself.

Running water, particularly in a mighty stream, influences the activity of the brain like some great musical composition,

especially when the latter contains a wealth of ordered tunes and harmonies. Without conscious exertion the difficulties in which the mind has floundered dissolve away. A regrouping takes place without the active interference of the thinker. Impressions, memories, fancies, problems, and ideas almost imperceptibly combine to form a new stream which may, perchance, give rise to new formations and unsuspected connexions that have been subconsciously prepared.

To Buddha, as well as to Ignatius Loyola, intuition came after stern and persevering exertion of mind and body. Let us bear this in mind when, later on in these lectures, we shall examine more closely the nature of intuition.

That night Siddhartha took something. The sacred writings of Buddhism have been untiring in describing what then took place in the Master's soul. In *Majjhima Nikaya*¹ we read of four degrees of ecstasy which are free from feelings both of joy and sorrow, being concentrated upon indifference. The words are: 'When my mind was calmed, cleansed, purified, freed from lust, loosed from defilement, mild, docile, firm, and unchangeable, I applied myself to remember and consider the forms of my former existence.' We are treated to the story of how Siddhartha penetrated into his many previous existences. This forms part of later additions.

How the Sambodhi, the enlightenment of Buddha, happened is quite clear. He knew that existence was suffering. Now he discovered the cause of suffering and the way to the abolition of suffering. When once the builder has been discovered who erected the mocking edifice of existence and suffering, when the cause has been found, then comes the abolition of the cause. Then the effect will be abrogated. The following verse deals with this:

It arises from a cause,
This the Master has discovered.
So at last it is abolished.
This the beggar monk has taught.

This suddenly became clear to him. The whole thing was revealed. But now he was assaulted by the temptation proper of his calling—consistently to fulfil his insight and to

¹ *Majjhima Nikaya*, iv. 5.

seek perfect peace. He did not succumb to it any more than Jesus succumbed to the temptation of the Christ-vocation. We shall speak of this not in the next lecture, which will treat of the Bhakti, but in the following lecture, which will show us what was the temptation, one not common to all ascetics, but unique, characteristic of Buddha alone.

No divinity brought help to Buddha. He did not deem the insight to be a revelation from above. What he found and created was a religion of salvation and not a religion of revelation. Salvation came by knowledge, *jnana*. It was a *jnana marga*. The cause of suffering and misfortune is *avidya*, ignorance. But we must not forget that this self-salvation makes use of exercises, Yoga, not to gain merit, or as an athletic exercise. Self-salvation has been systematized. Thus the originality of Buddha lies neither in self-salvation as such, nor in insight, nor in asceticism, but in the fact that, wise by experience, he rejected an eager, exaggerated asceticism and proclaimed the golden middle way.

One result of Buddha's discovery has been rightly emphasized by Vilhelm Grønbech. The unhappy and longing soul does not need to trouble itself with long preparations and wearisome austerities. Salvation is at hand. Do not worry, do not wait. Take it instantly. For salvation is not the result of troublesome efforts. Only open your eyes. Do not you see the cause of suffering? Man has only to realize the saving insight. We hear often in Buddhist literature of sudden conversions. Some one heard the Master preach. Suddenly he saw the truth and received peace, just as a piece of cloth takes the colour when it is cleansed from dirt.¹

The ascetics who had taken such offence when Siddharta abandoned his self-torture and took food, remained in the vicinity of Benares and there heard his sermon on the Golden Middle Way to Nirvana between the two perilous paths of error—violent asceticism and worldly conduct.

'There are two extremes, O recluses, which he who has gone forth ought not to follow: The habitual practice, on the one hand, of those things whose attraction depends upon the pleasures

¹ Grønbech, *Mystikere i Europa og Indien*, p. 133.

of sense, and especially of sensuality (a practice low and pagan, fit only for the worldly-minded, unworthy, of no abiding profit); and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification (a practice painful, unworthy, and equally of no abiding profit).

'There is a Middle Way, O recluses, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Perfect One—a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana.

'And which is that Middle Way, O recluses, discovered by the Perfect One—which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana? Verily it is the Noble Eightfold Path. That is to say:

'Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindedness, Right Rapture.

'This is the Middle Way, O recluses, discovered by the Perfect One—a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana.'¹

Buddha pierced to the secret of the life of the soul. *Nidanas*, the stages of absorption, have defied the analysis of researchers until Friedrich Heiler² undertook the testing of these methods and states and the comparison of the Nidana chain with what has been experienced and commended by other great mystics. Thereby he finally solved the riddle.

In his acute critical investigation, *Recherches sur la valeur de traditions bouddiques*, Ebbe Tuneld has shown that the Buddha legend reproduces a normal type. The evolution of Buddha towards the Buddhahood, according to Majjhima Nikaya answers to the normal evolution of an Arya into an Arya or a Savaka, a 'hearer', as it is told in ancient Indian (Hindu) literature. This does not, of course, prove a lack of historical truth in the Buddha legend. It cannot be decided which is here original, the normal path of an Arya or the personal experience of Siddhartha. In all likelihood this experience has been made by many. The actual process of salvation need not, in this connexion, concern us.

Original Buddhism exhibits to us a rational religion without

¹ Mahavagga, i. 6. 17 sqq.

² Heiler, *Die buddhistischen Versenkungsstufen*.

faith. Any one can observe the misery of the world. And any one can test the psychological effect of retiring from the world, calming the senses, following the method, and seeking peace remote from responsibility for one's community, family, and the other obligations of life. The Buddhist has to believe in the doctrine of the momentariness of all things and of constant fluctuation, though this is not a positive religious faith but rather an explanatory account of the world. There is, anyhow, a religious element in the recourse to Buddha, to the Triratna. We shall see its wonderful development later. A religious element can also be seen in the conception of the calm and purifying peace of Nirvana, Infinity.

Buddhism disappeared from the soil of India, for various reasons. But the Yogi, the professional ascetic remained, and with him also the Jina Order with its out-and-out asceticism. The exercises are regarded as a form of athletics. Just as in our day an athlete gains fame and honour by overdoing his exertions, so also in ancient and modern India. The Buddhist monks who were content with peace of mind were of little account compared with the self-torturing virtuosi who brought their skill to the highest pitch. Cannot a certain application be made to the athletics of our days, so excellent and necessary in themselves, but not a goal? The ideal of Vardhamana and the Jainas aim at championship in ascetics! Buddha commended the health of the soul through useful exertion and abstinence.

We find a religion without divinity, the consummation of ascetic mysticism. Buddhism went beyond Jinism and took away the soul also. It became a self-salvation without a soul, an art of transport into the right psychological state in the steady flux of physical and psychical factors.

To the psychological method of Buddhism appertains a metaphysical background.

"The picture of the universe which suggested itself to the mental eye of the Buddha, represented thus an infinite number of separate evanescent entities in a state of beginningless commotion, but gradually steering to Quiescence and to an absolute annihilation of all life, when all its elements have been, one after another, brought to a standstill. This ideal received a multitude of

designations among whom the name of Nirvāṇa was the most appropriate to express annihilation. The term was probably prebuddhistic and was formerly applied to the brahmanical ideal of the dissolution of the individual in the universal whole (*brahma-nirvāṇa*). . . . In the Buddhist community itself it provoked opposition which grew ever stronger and resulted, 500 years after the death of the Master, in what may be called a quite new religion, reposing on a quite different philosophic foundation.’¹

But it was not necessary to know the whole of the doctrine. A sick man does not need to know who the doctor is or of what the medicine is composed. He has only to follow the prescription and use the medicine. The image of a physician is also employed by Socrates and Jesus.

The medicine-man or rather magician, has kept the field in a very refined form. He employs the gods as a means. The Yogi has gone farther. He rejects them altogether. The self-glorification of man which in primitive practice is manifested in magic and witchcraft and, later on, in a self-sufficient science, is here perfected by exercises. Although Yoga aims at absorption in the One, in Brahman Atman, it is in its own strength that it achieves it. But not always so.

Hunger after the living God cannot be repressed. It is met by what may be called God’s own activity. When we use the term Revealed Religion it means that type of religion which claims to be revealed. Buddhism itself was to have a great future, thanks to the divine faith of Mahayana, which also practises Yoga, just as every genuine religion demands vigilance and self-control.

At the outset, Buddhism was a rational psychological method. But we shall see in a following lecture that the irrationality and inconsistency of Siddhartha, after he had gained his insight, has proved stronger than his rational method.

If Buddhism has thus reduced religion to psychology, then it has also become a psychologist *hors concours*. Tripitaka, both in its more accessible parts and in the psychological and philosophical completion of the doctrine in Abhidharma, long before our era developed a psychological analysis and

¹ Stcherbatsky, op. cit., p. 4.

experience which in acuteness and nicety is unmatched to-day. In the West it has found a congenial and acute interpreter in Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids.

In Buddhism Yoga, checked in its excesses, has in a way found its fulfilment: a rational self-salvation.

‘Apart from the . . . general function of Yoga, there is another special kind of it, the subjective counterpart of the first. It then appears as the mystic intuition of the true condition of the universe. The Buddhist Saint is supposed, in a moment of mystic illumination, suddenly to perceive the whole construction, with its gross and mystic worlds, as vividly as if it were a direct sense perception. As a psychological process it is equally taught in Hinayana and in Mahayana, but its content, the picture which reveals itself at this moment, is quite different in both systems. . . .

‘The future Saint has gone through a long course of moral training and he has carefully studied all the details of that philosophic construction, when in the moment of sudden illumination, what he had before tried to understand only theoretically, comes up before him with the vivacity of living reality. Beginning with this moment he is a Saint, all his habits of thought are changed. He directly views the universe as an infinite continuity of single moments in gradual evolution towards Final Extinction.’¹

No real god being left in that method of salvation, the Master might have said with the great Epic (E. W. Hopkins’s motto): ‘This is a holy mystery, which I declare unto you: there is nothing nobler than humanity.’²

¹ Stcherbatsky, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

² Mahabharata, xii. 300, 20.

IV

RELIGION AS DEVOTION, BHAKTI

THE self-glorification of asceticism and religion's fundamental character of training, exercise, were in India opposed by two different religious phenomena: the aristocratic doctrine of *Advaita*, beholding of the 'non-two-ness', 'one-ness', unity, which has already been dealt with, and the democratic, popular *Bhakti* salvation.

The latter is found in the greatest written document of Indian religion, *Bhagavadgita*. The original of this poem is dated by Garbe about 300–250 B.C. It was according to him revised in the second century A.D. Krishna-Vishnu was combined, not without difficulty, with the orthodox Brahma doctrine. Kalidasa, the greatest dramatist of India, about A.D. 450, knew the poem in its present shape.

Charpentier¹ dates the original somewhat later, about 200 B.C. *Gita*, 'the song' of Bhagavat, 'the High', as we know it, has included the doctrine of unity, the speculation on Brahma. W. Douglas P. Hill thinks that it was composed in the early years of the second century B.C.² by some brilliant member of the 'Krishna-Vasudeva' sect, using a quantity of older material. The Sadhu Sundar Singh, the evangelic Hindu beggar-monk and saint, knew it by heart when he was ten years old. And he asked me how Westerners, so many of whom seemed to him to be very worldly, could call his mother a heathen: she rose early in the morning and made her devotion with the *Gita*. The judgement differs from Hopkins's 'wholesale charges'³ to those millions in the East and the West, who use it as a Christian uses the New Testament.

This remarkable religious treatise breaks with self-salvation in two ways.

1. First by indicating a new path of salvation which does not consist in works, offerings, or the exploits of ascesis, nor in knowledge and insight, but in faith, devotion, love towards

¹ Charpentier, *Some Remarks on the Bhagavadgita*, p. 20.

² Hill, *Bhagavadgita*, p. 16.

³ Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

a living personal deity or saviour, an Ishvara. By means of asceticism man had become all and the lord of the gods. Here the god becomes lord and man is nothing before him. Salvation comes not by *tapas* and *yoga* but by divine grace, which is unmerited, not acquired, but given.

2. Moreover, piety loses its professional character. Yoga salvation, strictly speaking, does not allow of any other vocation in life. A man must leave his daily work and devote himself entirely to pious exercises. Gita proclaims a divine fellowship and a salvation compatible with every honest profession. Indeed, consistency will demand that a man's vocation and work in the community should become his religious duty.

Bhakti piety arose from gloomy depths that we cannot fathom. The cause is traceable to the longing for salvation and the intellectual arguments which appear in the Upanishads, the completion of the Veda. Even in the great thinker and priest Yajñavalkya whom we meet in one of the two most venerable Upanishads, the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, the propounder of the Atman-evangel, the doctrine of the world-soul, Atman, exhibits something of a personal warmth and affection, when he speaks of that all-embracing universal Being or Essence, which yet has a masculine name Atman. His wife asked him about immortality.

"Maitreyi!" said Yajñavalkya, "lo, verily, I am about to go forth from this state. Behold! let me make a final settlement for you and that Katyayani."

"Then said Maitreyi: "If now, Sir, this whole earth filled with wealth were mine, would I be immortal thereby?"

"No," said Yajñavalkya. "As the life of the rich, even so would your life be. Of immortality, however, there is no hope through wealth."

"Then said Maitreyi: "What should I do with that through which I may not be immortal? What you know, Sir—that, indeed, tell me!"

"Then said Yajñavalkya: "Ah (*bata*)! Lo (*are*), dear (*priya*) as you are to us, dear is what you say! Come, sit down, I will explain to you. But while I am expounding, do you seek to ponder thereon."

"Then said he: "Lo, verily, not for love of the husband is a husband dear, but for love of the Soul (*Atman*) a husband is dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of the wife is a wife dear, but for love of the Soul a wife is dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of the sons are sons dear, but for love of the Soul sons are dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of the wealth is wealth dear, but for love of the Soul wealth is dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of Brahmanhood (*brahma*) is Brahmanhood dear, but for love of the Soul Brahmanhood is dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of Kshatrahood (*kṣātra*) is Kshatrahood dear, but for love of the Soul Kshatrahood is dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of the worlds are the worlds dear, but for love of the Soul, the worlds are dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of the gods are the gods dear, but for love of the Soul the gods are dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of the beings (*bhuta*) are beings dear, but for love of the Soul beings are dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of all is all dear, but for love of the Soul all is dear.

“Lo, verily, it is the Soul (*Atman*) that should be seen, that should be hearkened to, that should be thought on, that should be pondered on, O Maitreyi. Lo, verily, with the seeing of, with the hearkening to, with the thinking of, and with the understanding of the Soul, this world-all is known.”¹

The dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna which begins in the thirty-ninth line of the second song and possibly marks the beginning of the Bhagavadgita proper, so notable in the history of religion, has been rightly termed an Upanishad where the teacher gives instruction to a pupil.² The Chandogya Upanishad is one of the two most ancient in this branch of literature. There figures one Krishna Devakiputra³ who listens to the teacher Ghora Angirasa. ‘Ghora Angirasa, having explained this to Krishna Devakiputra said—for he was free from thirst: “In his last hour he should take refuge in this threefold truth: Thou art the indestructible; Thou art the never reborn; Thou art the sharpening of the vital spirits.” And here are these two R̥k-verses:

“Just then they see the early dawning light of the old kind that gleameth beyond heaven.”

“From out of surrounding darkness we, beholding the higher

¹ Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, ii. 4. 1-5.

² Bhagavadgita, ii.

³ Chandogya Upanishad, ii. 17. 1 sqq.

light, have come to Surya god among the gods, the very highest light—yea, the very highest light.”¹

Presumably the kingdom of Surya, the sun, was the paradise of the nobleman.

‘In one’s final hour one ought to take refuge in three precious thoughts, viz. that some being is the indestructible, the never reborn (*i.e.* the everlasting absolute) and the sharpening of the vital spirits. This being, as far as my understanding goes, is not *brahman* but even Sūrya, the sun, or rather the radiant *brahma-loka* or *svarga* beyond the visible heaven to which pious men who fulfil their *svadharma* may aspire. In so far the teaching of Ghora tallies with the promise of *svarga* held out by Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna.’²

The Kshatra teacher Ghora Angirasa is mentioned in Kaushitaka Brahmana,³ ‘as being the Adhvaryu of the Ādityas which probably means a sort of Sun-worshipper. This certainly tallies well with the importance evidently ascribed to that luminary in the passage translated above’.⁴ It is very possible that the Krishna of the Gita is the same one who is called in Kaus. Br. xxx. 9 Krishna Angirasa; he would then have adopted the name of his teacher. There is no reason for not identifying our Krishna with the Krishna of the Chandogya Upanishad. ‘Thus the *Chandogya Upanishad* tells us about a certain Kṛṣṇa Devakīputra—and there is to me not the slightest doubt that he is identical with the Kṛṣṇa of the Great Epic—who was no doubt a *kṣattriya* and who was the pupil of Ghora Āngirasa.’⁵ That venerable Upanishad must in any case be regarded as older than Buddha. It means, that the Krishna religion must have existed in the seventh or sixth century before Christ. V. Grønbech comes to the same conclusion.

‘For Bhagavadgita is not the programme of the founder of a religion, not the first unspiritual proclamation of a new-found faith. The significance of the poem for posterity is due to its proclaiming the gospel of devotion in a form that can touch all Indian hearts, but the message itself dates from earlier times. Who gave it to the world and where he was born, we do not know; perhaps it arose from the preaching of an individual man, perhaps

¹ Charpentier, op. cit., p. 17.

² Ibid., p. 18.

³ Kaushitaka Brahmana, xxx. 6. ⁴ Charpentier, op. cit., p. 17. ⁵ Ibid., p. 18.

it arose from the experience of many souls in the same way as the Upanishads, so that no importance need be attached to the name of the man who first gave shape to the experience. This much only can we say, that the doctrine of devotion can be traced to the spiritual chaos generated by mysticism; so deep was the spiritual distress provoked by the new ideals that it forced to the front a new religion. Bhakti piety has its roots in the age of the Upanishads; which cannot be later than the ninth century and may very well be put back a hundred years and the religion proclaimed by Bhagavadgita in a form already strongly polished can scarcely be younger than the sixth century B.C.¹

Grønbech is certainly right in calling the doctrine professed by the Gita nothing less than a new religion. But in the Gita the Bhakti-ideal is already known and time-honoured. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. The simplest explanation of the names of Krishna and Arjuna in the Epic is that two men with those names once existed. In the epoch of Buddha they were already deified and worshipped, a process known in all parts of the earth, but for which the Indian soil seems to be especially favourable, according to Sir Alfred Lyall's famous book, *Asiatic Studies*.

The Upanishads themselves reveal sometimes a warmer faith in God than the regular identifying of oneself with Atman-Brahman.

Bhakti, love, devotion, homage, can be given to a man as well as to a deity. But in the theology of India Bhakti represents the relation of man to the personal god Ishvara (as before, and after), the lord, as distinct from the monistic doctrine of Advaita, perfected by Shankara as to the one, impersonal, all-embracing Being. Hauer distinguishes in the mysticism of the Upanishads² four lines at least:

1. Shiva-worship with Purusha as the highest being in the world and in the soul of man.
2. The Krishna religion which soon comes to maturity and reaches its prime in Bhagavadgita.
3. Sacerdotal speculation as to the impersonal Brahman.
4. The doctrine of Atman, put forward in the circle of the nobility as to the soul of man being identical with the world-soul.

¹ Grønbech, *Mystikere i Europa og Indien*, i, p. 84.

² Hauer, *Christliche Welt*, 1929, p. 722.

L. D. Barnett summarizes:

'*Bhakti*, the worship of a personal deity in a spirit of love, is not due to Christian influences, but represents a force which has been active in Hindu religion from very early times. Early Upanishads contain ideas of the kind which are, strictly speaking, inconsistent with the epistemological side of their doctrine, and can only be understood as echoes of contemporary theistic movements; and these utterances are, in essentials, quite in harmony with the fundamental doctrines of the *bhakta* churches, as in them the Brahma-Atma (Sachchid anānda) is conceived in almost the same mode as the Supreme Deity of the *bhaktas*. Hence Ramanuja could build up a complete theology of *bhakti* on the basis of the Upanishads without doing violence to them.

"The Svetasvatara Upanishad (not, however, a very early work) takes the vital step in this direction by demanding as requisite for spiritual enlightenment equal *bhakti* for the *deva* (personal deity), and for the *guru* (religious teacher, representing the deity on earth). This is typical of the regular *bhakti*-cult."¹

As Professor A. B. Keith remarks,² the Ishvara, the personal God, is in Svetasvatara Upanishad 'infinitely more vivid and important' than that of the Yoga-system. In comparison with several other Upanishads, however, this treatise lacks clearness of conception. Professor Keith thinks that, in order to meet the cravings of strong, popular religion, the author introduced the personal god (called Maheshvara, Shiva, Isha, &c.), thus harmonizing contrasting views.

'*Bhakti* means literally "service" of a *bhagavān*, which signifies originally any "lord" and finally "Our Lord". The *bhakta* churches, when they first appear distinctly on the horizon of history, all bear this character: they are devoted to the emotional worship of a *bhagavān*, who is an historical or epico-historical person conceived either as such (e.g. Krishna in the older legends, or Buddha), or as the incarnation of some earlier and purely mythical deity, usually Vishṇu, with an increasing tendency to worship the earthly teacher representing him."³

This remarkable Upanishad, which itself is hardly more ancient than Buddha, has a content which must be prior in time to Buddhism.

¹ *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, ii, p. 48.

² Keith, *The Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 549.

³ Barnett, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

As early as the Rigveda we find passages which speak not of one god among others, but of God as such.¹

As we have already remarked, there appertains to Brahman Atman in the ancient Upanishads a personal touch. In the Svetasvatara Upanishad Yoga is sharpened, but for the one who thus exerts himself it is important to rely on a divine helper.

'It must needs be a God who drives off all false mythological idols and who as Isvara, "Lord", embodies in being and doing the pure, great ideas of omnipotence and grace. Of course—and no wonder—this God could then again plunge into the old ghostly darkness. He could assume the names of Siva, Vishnu, bearers of wild, sensual, grotesque conceptions.'²

In this Upanishad the neutral supreme Brahman actually appears as ruler, Isha, and as creator by his magical power, Maya.

Of him are spoken the words borrowed from the Kathaka Upanishad,

'Him who is the constant among the inconstant, the intelligence among intelligences,
The One among many, who grants desires.'³

Personal life covets personal life. This deity is not caught by abstraction and speculation but by the yearning and passionate devotion of the heart. The Upanishad ends:

'To him who has the highest devotion (*bhakti*) for God,
And for his spiritual teacher (*guru*) even as for God,
To him these matters which have been declared
Become manifest if he be a great soul (*mahātman*).'⁴

The thought is rendered almost literally in Bhagavadgita where Krishna says: 'He who loves me shall not be lost.' No wonder that Oldenberg terms this Upanishad the forerunner of the Gita.⁵

We must pay some attention to the small Upanishad which has in its name the word 'Lord', Isha, a designation of the personal God.

'All this, whatsoever moves on earth, is to be hidden in the

¹ Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden*, p. 274.

² Ibid., p. 275.

³ Svetasvatara Upanishad, 6. 13.

⁴ Ibid. 6. 23.

⁵ Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

Lord.' The Lord, *īś*, is personal.¹ Max Müller, who made the translation for *S.B.E.*, says that this Upanishad 'wishes to teach the uselessness by themselves of all good works . . . sacrificial, legal, or moral . . . and yet to recognize, if not the necessity, at least the harmlessness of good works, provided they are performed without any selfish motives. . . . If only a man knows that all must be surrendered to the Lord, then the work done by him will not cling to him.'²

Robert Ernest Hume translates:

'By the Lord (*īśā*) enveloped must this all be—
Whatever moving thing there is in the moving world.
With this renounced, thou mayest enjoy.
Covet not the wealth of anyone at all.'³

About the presence of the Lord in all beings and on the freedom of the mind the Isha Upanishad professes ideas similar to those recurring in Bhagavadgita.

The Bhakti religion of the Gita proceeds from several unknown or little-known forms of worship. Narayana, 'Son of man', belongs to the gods and beings who are in the Maitri Upanishad identified with Atman.⁴ The deification also of Arjuna is proved by the fact that Panini mentions sectarians called Vasudevaka and Arjunaka. Gricerson simplifies the matter: The Bhagavata religion was founded by a certain Krishna Vasudeva as a monotheistic faith.⁵ No doubt Bhagavat was the name of a deity. We shall come back to these observations and to the magnificent hymn on Krishna contained in the eleventh song of the Gita.

'The high one', Bhagavat, the object of Bhakti, in Gita 'The song' of Bhagavat, is Krishna. It is the affective nature of love which saves. Krishna is one with the all-embracing divine being, at any rate in the present form of Bhagavadgita. Consequently he can say:

'To those men who think on me and worship me with undivided hearts, ever controlled, I bring the power to gain and guard. Even those who are devoted to other Lords of Heaven, and

¹ *S.B.E.* i. 311, 314.

² *Ibid.*, p. 314; cf. Hume, *Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, pp. 362 sqq.

³ Isa Upanishad, 1.

⁴ Maitri Upanishad, vi. 8, vii. 7.

⁵ *Theol. Jahresbericht*, 1908, p. 71.

sacrifice to them, possessed of faith—even they, O son of Kunti, do sacrifice to me alone, but not as law ordains.¹

It is not surprising that people have jumped to the idea of a Christian origin for the new piety of Bhagavadgita. Both the idea of incarnation and the doctrine of salvation by love towards the deity seem to point to this. Moreover, the latter is unlike the attitude of higher Indian piety which was directed towards an impersonal Being.

Indian tradition seems to support such a presumption. In Mahabharata we are told of four wise men who came to 'the white island', or 'the island of the white' or 'the white land', *Sveta-dvīpa*, where the white people were filled with love towards the only and invisible god Narayana and worshipped him in their hearts with softly murmured prayers. In praying they turned to the north and east. They offered no sacrifices but only a spiritual worship. This god thus lived not in any heaven but beyond the ocean on a white island.²

This story, which is filled with fantastic elements, belongs to the youngest parts of Mahabharata and may well owe something to acquaintance with some Christian tract. (Garbe imagines Nestorian settlers at Lake Balkasch.) This would not, however, explain the origin of the Bhakti doctrine. In spite of the fact that the Krishna legend undoubtedly was subjected to Christian influence at a later date, we must admit that the Bhakti piety was not a Christian loan, but probably of Indian and certainly of pre-Christian origin.

Narayana appears in the Vishnu and Krishna religion as another name of the same deity, but was certainly at first a special deity. The same holds good of Vasudeva. From the outset these divine names seem to have been connected with Bhakti piety. Its earliest history is dim. The expression 'the exalted one', 'the high', *bhagavat*, an ancient name for divine and holy beings which is applied to Krishna in the song, and became one of the commonest titles of Buddha, was possibly at first the name of a deity characteristic of the Bhakti religion. Mahabharata already terms its adherents

¹ Bhagavadgita, ix. 22, 23.

² Mahabharata, xii. 338 sqq.; Otto, *Vischnu-Nārāyaṇa*, pp. 32 sqq.

bhagavatas, bhagavat-worshippers. In any case Vasudeva-worshippers are mentioned from the fourth century before Christ, and at the same time the word *bhakti* is employed by Panini concerning the relation between man and the deity, particularly Vasudeva. Krishna was hailed as an avatara of Vishnu even when the Greek physician Megasthenes sojourned in northern India at the beginning of the third century B.C., and almost certainly far earlier.

It is, however, in the form of love towards Krishna that Bhakti piety, the Bhagavat religion, Vasudeva-worship or whatever we call it, appears in the Gita and became a power in India. Krishna, the bold yet wise and affectionate hero, has become a divine-human ideal figure in India. In recent Indian writings and essays he is held up as a rallying-point and a pattern. In his name, it is said, the regeneration of India will take place. The scanty legendary or mythical sayings contained in this epic poem about the deified hero are collected and enlarged by affectionate and enthusiastic invention to form a kind of gospel about a great and noble man who lived in ancient India. The awkward stories of the very sensually coloured Krishna cult about the shepherd god's youthful adventures with the shepherd girls, and his other daring pranks, belong to a later development and are belittled as far as possible, being sometimes ascribed to later slander. Krishna is to be to India what Christ is to the people of the West.

Thus far the Indian admirers of Bhagavadgita and their imitators.

The critical science of religion, reacting from traditional credulity, has sometimes been inclined to banish from the world of men not only patriarchs and saga-heroes but even a Moses, a Zarathushtra, and a Buddha. To the historicity of Krishna it has scarcely given a thought, much less opposed it. And now the mania for making myths and divine beings of the ancient figures of religion has passed over, like other infantile diseases, under the healthy influence of the archaeological finds around the Nile, Euphrates, and Tigris, which have made the old dates less terrifying and widened the horizon of history. There is now a tendency to an opposite

extreme. The 'euhemerism' of Hellenistic times which declared the gods to be kings and wise men who had once walked the earth seems to have risen again. Orpheus, the mythical Thracian singer, has been made the founder of a religion. The same happens to Krishna. Richard Garbe believes that he, Krishna, the son of Vasudeva and Devaki, founded a monotheistic religion a few centuries before Buddha or earlier and was deified like other founders of religions. Examination of the evidence of the sources makes this appear less unlikely than the case of Orpheus. But it seems hopeless to breathe historical life into Krishna, still less to imbue him with the life of the creator of a religion, however likely it seems to me that behind the half or wholly deified figures of many epic tales and myths, and behind the gradually formed Krishna legend, there was a human life. The simplest explanation undoubtedly is that Krishna did exist and trod the soil of India. But what is told of him is scarcely calculated to make of him a kind of Christ, an ideal figure for the millions of India.

In the West the Gita first became known through the translation of Charles Wilkins in 1785: '*The Bhagvat-Geeta, or Dialogues of Krēṣhna and Arjoon*; in eighteen lectures with notes, translated from the original in the Sanskrēṭ . . . London: C. Nourse, 1785.' A letter written by Warren Hastings to accompany the translation is worthy of perusal. The finest translation is the Latin rendering which A. W. von Schlegel in 1823 appended to his critical edition of the text. Charpentier¹ has recently rescued from obscurity the brilliant paper that W. von Humboldt read on the Gita in the Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin, printed in 1826. F. Otto Schrader has found and published a somewhat different text, unknown hitherto: *The Kashmir Recension of the Bhagavadgita*, Stuttgart, 1930. But the variations have no importance for the conception of Bhakti.

The Gita is itself conscious of its age. At the beginning of the fourth song 'the High One', Bhagavat, says of the Bhakti doctrine:

'To Vivasvat I expounded this immutable doctrine of control;

¹ Charpentier, op. cit., p. 1.

to Manu did Vivasvat declare it; Manu told it to Ikshvaku. Thus passed down in succession, the Royal Sages learned it; with long lapse of time this doctrine perished in the world, Paramtapa. This, even this same doctrine do I declare to thee to-day, seeing thou art my votary, my comrade; for this is the mystery supreme.¹

While the gods grew more and more incapable of saving, and ascetics and seers of Brahman Atman more and more arrogant, there was somewhere in India a form of worship which held its followers, a tribe, a clan, in a divine fear and affectionate devotion to the deity. In the fullness of time, when the resources of the higher religion seemed to be exhausted, when the two paths of salvation, *Karma marga* and *Jnana marga*, seemed to have left their course and got entangled in human jungles, this hitherto remote worship was interpreted by a great poet in a didactic poem which was incorporated in Mahabharata—or properly, in the part of the great epos which enters as an episode in the strife between *pandavas* and *kauravas*. In reality the Bhagavadgita contains a whole doctrine of salvation and a view of life which has absorbed into itself an independent religious school of thought and elaborated it into the best and most famous, if not the most beautiful, didactic poem of India: ‘the song’, *gita*, the song above all songs, ‘the song of the High One’: Bhagavadgita.

Some scholars regard the Gita as an indivisible whole. Others, not without reason and with a measure of success, distinguish between different original texts, one of which, corresponding to the commencement of the second song, is believed simply to have told what passed when the hesitating Arjuna was persuaded by Krishna to fight. The other is thought to have consisted of the terrifying revelation of Krishna in all the power of his deity. These two parts are thus, according to this view, the most ancient parts of the Gita.² In addition there is the Bhakti Upanishad proper, or the poem from ii. 39 to xi. 50, as well as an addition, songs xii–xviii. 73, which are undeniably a later production.³

So much is plain—that this new doctrine of salvation was

¹ Bhagavadgita, xii. 1–3.

² Fr. Weinrich, *Theol. Literaturzeitung*, vii, 1931, p. 146.

³ Charpentier, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

not originated in sacerdotal circles, but among the nobility. The characters in the poem, Samjaya and Arjuna, are not priests; they belong to the warrior caste. Our mind goes, as we have seen, to the salvation-seeking laymen who enshrined the fruits of their speculation in some of the Upanishads. There can be discerned a non-sacerdotal piety which liberated itself from sacrifice and the hair-splitting of speculation.

The Bhakti Sutras have been attributed to Sandilya, whose hymn in Chandogya Upanishad Oldenberg so justly admires.¹ That is impossible, since they quote Bhagavadgita and are thus later than Gita and, consequently, much later than the time of Sandilya. Perhaps the tradition builds on a certain spiritual kinship. For in some of the Upanishads the god has a warmer, more personal, touch. Yoga, asceticism, and mental concentration are not enough. After all his exertions, man is powerless to attain the highest truth and salvation. This is expressed in the sublime verse in the Kathaka Upanishad: 'How perceive Atman?'²

Preparation is needed. To this appertain sacrifice, although sacrificial religion is here only a dead relic, a shackle which, strictly speaking, only piety preserves from being discarded, and further, good behaviour and the ascetic rules for self-control and contemplation. But no exertion or virtuosity suffices. On its higher level the Upanishad religion had glimpses of the path and has given two hints of a blessed experience of illumination and release in its original purity. Both can be seen in the Kathaka Upanishad, the pearl of the Atman literature.

This salvation, in contrast to the sacrificial and ascetic doctrine of salvation by works, is a salvation by knowledge. But no learning suffices, no conclusion of the reason, no analysis, only the instructions of another who is already 'seeing'.

'Not by reasoning is this thought to be attained,
Proclaimed by another indeed, it is for easy understanding,
dearest friend.'³

¹ Chandogya Upanishad, iii. 14; Oldenberg, op. cit., p. 57.

² Kathaka Upanishad, vi. 4 sqq.

³ Ibid. ii. 9.

It is a help to hear another relate. But can the other give anything? He can lead us by the hand to the border of a religious experience that is the secret of religious communication, but no farther. The other can describe, but I must myself experience. Experience itself cannot be passed from one to another. Nor can one take it to oneself.

The Kathaka Upanishad has a word about this, a brief passing word, which, in my opinion, sets forth what is deepest and truest about the way to the liberating sight of Atman.

'This Soul (Atman) is not to be obtained by instruction,
Nor by intellect, nor by much learning.
He is to be obtained only by the one whom He chooses;
To such a son that Soul (Atman) reveals his own person.'¹

At bottom, the knower of Atman is aware that his insight is a piece of good fortune, a benediction, a gift.

It is far from this Atman to the Bhakti faith which saves, but it is yet farther to self-salvation.

The Gita is not revolutionary. It does not wish to overthrow the existing state. It will not upset and destroy, but fulfil. The Gita would connect the Bhagavata doctrine with the Samkhya philosophy which did not acknowledge any deity, and with Yoga where the idea of God had an inconsiderable place. Yoga, ascetic zeal, becomes to Bhagavat worshippers the same as Bhakti: *divine rapture*, devoted worship. Samkhya and Yoga are filled with the living assurance of Bhakti piety as to the god revealed in human shape.

In Bhagavadgita pains are taken to prove that the two as yet uncompleted systems: 'that of the Samkhyas with the method of knowledge, and that of the Yogins with the method of work,'² the analytical, theoretical Samkhya, philosophical knowing, and the more practical and ascetic Yoga, the knowledge of 'exercise', the methods of ascetic piety (the sense in the Gita is often: performance of duty), rightly seen, are complementary to each other, forming one whole, and thus agree with the Gita's own doctrine of salvation. For the poem knows of a higher way: Bhakti, i.e.

¹ Ibid. ii. 23.

² Bhagavadgita, iii. 3.

devotion, love for and trust in a personal deity. This 'faith' performs what works and knowledge are not able to do. Redemption is gained by the mind's warm embrace of a saviour-divinity.

The song of the 'High One' became revolutionary not by being negative but by being positive. The greatest reforms in the spiritual life of man have come about not by opposition to the given, but by the coming of something positively new, an insight, a divine relation, a personality.

We notice in the Bhagavadgita (i) the being and place of the deity, (ii) the faith, Bhakti, of man, (iii) the doctrine of vocation, (iv) a newer form of spiritual freedom, (v) its popular appeal.

I

'The High One', 'the Lord', Bhagavat, is in this case Krishna as one of the incarnations of Vishnu. In the doctrine of avatars, 'descents', i.e. incarnations, revelations of the highest deity, the divinity draws nigh to the heart that yearns for salvation. The god takes shape and dwells on earth, showing his wisdom, power, and love to men. This is the religious implication of the avatara doctrine. At the same time it favours universalism: the various divine figures as well as the human proclaimers and revealers of religion can be amalgamated into one, as various 'descents' of the same eternal deity.

The god Krishna himself is born to the world now and again as men need him.

'Many births of me are passed, and of thee, O Arjuna. I know them all; thou knowest them not, Paraintapa. Though unborn and immutable in essence, though Lord of beings, yet governing Nature, which is mine, I come into being by my miraculous power. For whensoever right declines, O Bharata, and wrong upriseth, then I create myself. To guard the good and to destroy the wicked and to confirm the right, I come into being in this age and that.'¹

The Veda gods have become harmless. This god has a property which is essential to religion. He can terrify.

When Arjuna has gained illumination by the instruction

¹ Bhagavadgita, iv. 5-8.

of the 'High One' he asks permission to behold his divine figure.¹ Bhagavat declares that a human eye cannot behold him. In Bhagavata-purana Narada relates how he had meditated on the lotus-foot of Vishnu out in the forest at the foot of a pipata-tree and, while suddenly dissolved in tears of longing, he had beheld the deity. But when Narada desired to see the god again, Vishnu had disappeared, having comforted him by saying that he cannot be beheld by one who still is swayed by passions and practises false Yoga.²

In this later writing the countenance of the god has become mild and gracious. But in the Gita it is crushing and terrifying. Arjuna receives a divine eye in order to behold the divine power of Krishna.³

'If the splendour of a thousand suns were all at once to rise in the sky, that would be like the splendour of that Mighty One.'⁴

Says Arjuna tremblingly:

'For by thee alone are these interspaces of heaven and earth pervaded, and all the quarters of the sky; when it beholds this form of thine, marvellous, terrible, shudders the threefold world, O Mighty One.

'Verily unto thee do these hosts of deities draw near, some in affright laud thee with folded hands; crying "All Hail!" Great Seers and Perfect Ones in hosts praise thee with hymns of praise abounding. . . .

'Beholding thy great form with many mouths and eyes, with many arms and thighs and feet, with many bellies, a form of terror with many teeth, the worlds do quake, O thou of mighty arm, and I quake too.

'For when I see thee touch the sky, with varying hues agleam, with open mouths and wide resplendent eyes, my inner being quakes; nor constancy I find nor quietude, O Vishnu! . . .

'Tell me, who art thou of dread form? Reverence to thee, O chief of Heavenly Lords! Be gracious! Thee I desire to know as primal; for thy forthcoming to action I do not understand.'

Arjuna bows with clasped hands and casts himself upon the ground before the High One, saying:

'Thou art the Father of this world, of all that moves and does

¹ Ibid. xi.

² Bhagavata-purana, i. 6. 10 sqq.; Otto, *Vishnu Nārāyana*, pp. 59 sqq.

³ Bhagavadgita, xi. 8.

⁴ Ibid. xi. 12.

not move; thou art to be adored, its Master reverend; there is none equal unto thee; how could there be a greater in the threefold world, O thou whose power knows no rival.'

He beseeches the god graciously to resume his usual form. The High One answers:

'Grace I have shown to thee, O Arjuna, revealing to thee by mine own power this my form supreme—glorious, universal, infinite, primal—which none save thee has ever seen.'

It was a unique revelation.

'Tremble not thou, nor let thy spirit be perplexed, looking on this so awful form of mine. Free from fear, with gladdened heart, behold again that other form of mine—yea, this!'

And Arjuna says:

'Now when I see this pleasant human form of thine, Janardana, I am become master of myself, I return to my normal state.'¹

There is good reason for recognizing in this dazzling theophany an independent hymn in which the Bhagavat worshippers glorified their deity. Krishna is praised as a summary of all divinities:

'Thou art Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, Sasanka, Prajapati, and the Great-grandsire; reverence, reverence to thee a thousand times, and yet again and again reverence, reverence to thee!'²

He is greater than Brahman (xi. 37) or identical with Brahman (x. 12) and with Atman dwelling in the soul of the creatures (x. 11), the Supreme Self who enters and supports the worlds (xv. 17). When it is said that he exists in all worlds and is the author of the sacred writings we possibly have to do with later additions. But he is the beginning of the gods and of the great seers (x. 2). He is not a god among the gods but, to the believer, the God, the One in heaven and on earth with which man has to reckon.

'The Lord, O Arjuna, dwells in the heart of every being, and by his miraculous power spins round all beings set on the machine.'³

But this god is not only mighty and formidable, he is also love and trust, and calls forth love and trust. It matters little what deity man worships. If his love and devotion

¹ Bhagavadgita, xi. 20 sqq.

² Ibid. xi. 39.

³ Ibid. xviii. 61.

are true it is valid even if he turns to another god, yet none other than Krishna himself.

'If any votary desires with faith to reverence any form, I make that very faith of his secure. By that faith controlled he seeks to reverence that one, and thence he obtains his desires—but it is I alone who grant them.'¹

II

All depends on the quality of the Bhakti, devotion, love, which men give to the god. Whatever shape their worship takes and to whomsoever they turn, the true feeling of the heart will attain the one true God.

'To those men who think on me and worship me with undivided hearts, ever controlled, I bring the power to gain and guard. Even those who are devoted to other Lords of Heaven, and sacrifice to them, possessed of faith—even they, O son of Kunti, do sacrifice to me alone, but not as law ordains. For of all sacrifices am I the enjoyer and the lord; but men recognize me not in truth; therefore they fall. To the Lords of Heaven go they who pay their vows to Heaven's Lords; to the Fathers go they who pay their vows to the Fathers; to the Ghosts go they who offer to the Ghosts; to me, too, do they go who sacrifice to me.'²

We are reminded of Luther's words in the Large Catechism under the First Commandment:

'A god is that whereto we are to look for all good and to take refuge in all distress; so that to have a god is to trust and believe him from the whole heart; as I have often said that the confidence and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust be right, then is your god also true. And, on the other hand, if your trust be false and wrong, then you have not the true God; for these two belong together, viz. faith and God. That now, I say, upon which you set your heart and put your trust is properly your god.'³

'Man is instinct with faith; as that wherein a man has faith, so verily is he.'⁴

It is the love, the affection, the trust, the faith, which saves.

'Freed from affection, fear, and wrath, fulfilled with me, depending upon me, by discipline of knowledge cleansed, into my

¹ Ibid. vii. 21, 22.

² Ibid. ix. 22-5.

³ Jacobs, *The Book of Concord*, p. 391.

⁴ Bhagavadgita, xvii. 3.

being have many come. However men approach me, in that same way do I show them favour.¹

'Hear, O son of Pritha, how thou shalt without doubt know me fully, if thy mind be attached to me, if thou practise the method of work, if thou rely on me.'²

'I am the origin of all; all issues forth from me; believing this, the wise devoutly worship me, filled full with love. Their thought on me, their life absorbed in me, teaching one another and speaking ever of me, they are delighted and content. To those men, ceaselessly controlled, who worship with affectionate devotion, I give that union with discernment, whereby they come to me.'³

All is a gift of grace.

'Whose work is unto me, whose goal I am, my votary free from attachment, void of enmity to any being—he comes to me, O son of Pandu.'⁴

'On me set thy mind, on me let thy reason dwell; in me shalt thou dwell hereafter; there is no doubt.'⁵

'In him alone seek refuge with all thy being, Bharata; by his grace shalt thou win to peace supreme, the eternal resting-place. This knowledge have I taught thee, mystery of mysteries; fully consider this; then, as thou wilt, so act. Hear again my highest word, deepest mystery of all; exceeding beloved art thou of me; therefore shall I declare what is thy weal. With mind on me devoutly worship me, to me do sacrifice, to me do reverence; to me shalt thou come; true is my promise to thee; thou art dear to me. Abandoning every duty, come to me alone for refuge; I will release thee from all sins, sorrow not!'⁶

Compare passages in the Old Testament.

The last quotation shows how free this piety is from traditional sacrifices, works, and ascetic exercises. The way to this deliverance, as we have seen, was prepared for centuries in the piety of the Upanishads. The two paths, the path of works and exercise, *Karma marga*, and the path of insight, knowledge, *Jnana marga*, do not suffice. Gita shows another path and a higher one, *Bhakti marga*. As Narayana, another name for Vishnu-Krishna, says in a later work:

'Threefold is the way to salvation, as already stated: the way of those who practise works, the way of those who practise know-

¹ Bhagavadgita, iv. 10, 11.

² Ibid. vii. 1.

³ Ibid. x. 8-10.

⁴ Ibid. xi. 55.

⁵ Ibid. xii. 8.

⁶ Ibid. xviii. 62-6.

ledge, and the third way of the Satvatas. This one surpasses all others.'¹

Sacrificing to the gods and spirits and the self-torture of ascesis are of no avail.

'Men of Purity do sacrifice to Heavenly Lords; men of Energy, to Goblins and Ogres; and others—men of Darkness—offer sacrifices to Spirits of the Dead and hordes of Ghosts. Those men who practise dire austerity not enjoined by Scripture, wedded to hypocrisy and thought of self, full of the strength of passion and desire, weakening the company of elements that dwell within the body—witless fools—and also me who dwell within the body, know these as men of Devilish resolves.'²

Neither works of sacrifice or of ascesis, nor the path of insight and knowledge are sufficient.

'To the Lords of Heaven do some Ascetics observe the sacrifice; and others by sacrifice only offer sacrifice in the fire that is Brahman. Some offer the senses, hearing, and the rest, in the fires of restraint; others offer the objects of sense, sound, and the rest, in the fire of senses.'³

'Not by the Vedas, not by sacrifice, not by scripture-reading, alms, or rites, nor yet by grim austerities can I be seen in such a form by any but thee in the world of men, O hero of the Kurus.'⁴

'Neither by the Vedas, nor by austerity, nor by alms, nor yet by sacrifice, can I be seen in such a form as thou hast seen.'⁵

Sacrifice, ascesis, and training are by no means forbidden nor abolished. They must be performed in the right frame of mind. According to the three ground-qualities, *gunas*, Gita speaks of three kinds of ascesis, as also of three kinds of sacrifice.

'That austerity which is practised to win welcome, honour, and respect, and with hypocrisy, is here declared to be of Energy; unstable as it is and unsure. That austerity which is practised with fond conviction, with self-torture, or to compass another's ruin, is said to be of Darkness.'⁶

Different is the true ascesis.

'Speech that gives no shock, true, pleasant, helpful; the practice, too, of sacred recitation, are called austerity of speech. Serenity

¹ Brihad-Brahma-Samhita, i. 4. 19; Otto, *Vischnu Nārāyana*, p. 71.

² Bhagavadgita, xvii. 4-6.

³ Ibid. iv. 25, 26.

⁴ Ibid. xi. 48.

⁵ Ibid. xi. 53.

⁶ Ibid. xvii. 18, 19.

of mind, benignity, silence, and self-restraint, and purity of soul—these are called austerity of mind. This threefold austerity, practised with high faith by men who desire not fruit and are controlled, they call austerity of Purity.’¹

Thus the believer neither need nor ought to abandon works.

‘Works of sacrifice, almsgiving, and austerity should not be abandoned, but surely should be done; sacrifice, almsgiving, and austerity purify thoughtful men.’²

Arjuna asks:

‘Thou tellest, O Krishna, of renunciation of works, and again of practice; of these two declare to me with no uncertain voice that one which is the better.’

The High One answers:

‘Renunciation and practice of work both lead to highest bliss; but of these two practice is better than renunciation of work.’³

All depends on the Bhakti faith.

Gita knows well the rules for inbreathing and outbreathing and for the fixing of the gaze on a point between the eyebrows.⁴

In the sixth song the High One gives a classical description of the true asceticism, which must not care for its works, but only seek freedom.

‘For no one, without renouncing purpose, walks on the path of practice. For the saint who seeks to scale the heights of control, work is said to be the means; when that same man has scaled the heights of control, quietude is said to be the means. For when a man clings not to things of sense or to works, and has renounced all purposes, then he is said to have scaled the heights of control.’⁵

Instruction is given:

‘Constantly to the practice of control should the Ascetic set himself, remaining in a secret place, alone, holding his thoughts in check, without hopes and without possessions. Setting for himself in a pure place a firm seat neither very high nor very low, with a cloth, a deer-skin, and *kuśa* grass upon it. There sitting on the seat, with mind concentrated on a single point, holding the

¹ Bhagavadgita, xvii. 15–17.

³ Ibid. v. 1, 2.

⁴ Ibid. v. 27.

² Ibid. xviii. 5.

⁵ Ibid. vi. 2–4.

functions of thought and sense in check, he should set himself to the practice of control, for the cleansing of the self. Steady, holding his body, head, and neck balanced and motionless, fixing his gaze on the end of his nose, and looking not about him. Tranquil, free from fear, and steadfast in the vow of continence, holding the mind in check, with me in all his thoughts, so should he sit, controlled, intent on me. The Ascetic who ever thus with mind restrained sets himself to the practice of control comes to the peace whose end is calm, the peace that is in me. . . .

'When thought, subdued, rests only on Self, when he is free from longing for any desire; then is he called controlled. "A lamp unflickering in a windless place"—that is the simile men use when an Ascetic, with thought restrained, practises control of self.'¹

Arjuna wonders:

'For this control, which thou, O Madhusudana, hast declared to be by evenness, I see no sure establishment because of fickleness. For fickle is the mind, O Krishna, riotous, violent, stubborn; to check it is, I think, as though one checked the wind—a task most difficult.'

The High One gives the answer:

'Without doubt, thou strong of arm, the mind is hard to check and fickle; but, O son of Kunti, by practice and desirelessness it is arrested. For one whose spirit is unsubdued control is hard to win, I deem; but one who strives, self-governed, can win it by right method.'²

We recognize the classical methods of Yoga which are here recommended as well as Samkhya. But a line is drawn between the true Yogin and the ascetic. He reaches highest when he gives to God his love and faith.

'More excellent than the austere, more excellent even than men of knowledge is the Ascetic deemed; more excellent than workers is the Ascetic; therefore be thou Ascetic. Of all Ascetics, too, him who with faith devoutly worships me, whose inmost self is lost in me, I hold to be the most controlled.'³

Devotion to God, Bhakti, sanctifies and ennobles all. In faith, in Bhakti, all shall be done and will then avail.

'Whatever work thou doest, whatever thou dost eat, whatever

¹ Ibid. vi. 10 sqq.

² Ibid. vi. 33-6.

³ Ibid. vi. 46, 47.

thou dost sacrifice or give, whatever be thine austere practices, do all, O son of Kunti, as an offering to me.¹

He who believes in God will himself become free from sin and win goodness. Man becomes good by faith.

'For even those, O son of Pritha, who are born of the womb of sin—women, Vaisyas, and Sudras too—if they resort to me, go on the highest way. How much more pure Brahmanas and devout King-sages? Thou who hast gained this world, impermanent and pleasureless, devoutly worship me! On me thy mind, to me be thy devotion, for me thy sacrifice; to me do reverence; thus holding thyself in control, and making me thine aim, even to me shalt thou come.'²

'For none, my son, who acts uprightly goes on an evil way.'³

III

The Gita urges nobody to leave his worldly employment in order to practise the exercises of piety. The doctrine of vocation is part of the original in the poem. No one may put away his own profession in order to take a short cut. Where a man is placed, there he must do his duty.

'Better a man's own duty, though ill-done, than another's duty well-performed.'⁴

Here morality is not only a preparation, a lower stage by way of which man finally reaches asceticism and the spiritual life. But God is worshipped when the duties of morality are fulfilled. Morality becomes worship instead of exercise.

We know the situation. On the field of Kuru, King Duryodhana and his men are opposed to the Pandhu host in battle array. Arjuna, who is in the Pandhu host, feels his heart grow soft. How can he slay his kinsmen, murder the members of his family? His dearest wish would be, unarmed and unresisting, to be slain by his adversary. He keeps his chariot standing between the two armies, sinks down in it, lays aside his bow and arrow, and his heart is full of sorrow. This natural feeling is an honour to the spiritual state of India at that time. The reluctance to fight and kill is strengthened by religion, the first commandment of which is *ahimsa*, not to kill any living being.

¹ Bhagavadgita, ix. 37.

³ Ibid. vi. 40.

² Ibid. ix. 32-4.

⁴ Ibid. xviii. 47.

But the High One, Bhagavat, comes and seeks to persuade him. The soul of Arjuna is smitten by doubt. What is his duty? The High One adduces no less than six reasons why he should begin the fight.

1. Death is a matter of indifference. After death the soul enters another body; the wise man is not moved by the fact that sooner or later he will die. The spirit is incorruptible. He does not kill nor is he killed; although the body be destroyed. 'Thou hast grieved for those who are not in need of grief—yet speakest thou not unwisely. Wise men grieve not for dead nor for living.'¹

2. The most important reason is *duty*. The noble warrior must fulfil the duty of his vocation, just as every human being is bound by his occupation. 'If thou wilt not wage this lawful war thou wilt neglect caste-duty and reputation and fall into sin.'² There are two ways: Samkhya's way by means of insight, and the Yogi's way by means of works. But man does not win perfection by neglecting his work and fleeing from the world. In reality man does not remain without doing work. He is caused to work by the powers of nature.³ 'Do thou the work thou art obliged to do.'⁴ If the god did not work his work, the worlds would fall in ruin.⁵ 'As each man is devoted to his duty, so does he win perfection.'⁶ The obligations of the three classes are allotted later on in the poem.

'Quietude, self-restraint, austerity, cleanness, long-suffering, and uprightness, knowledge, experience, and belief, are the Brahmana's duties, born of his nature. Bravery, spirit, constancy, adroitness, and courage to face the foe, generosity and lordliness, are the Kshatriya's duties, born of his nature. Tilling the soil, herding cows, and commerce, are the Vaisya's duties, born of his nature; and of a Sudra service is the proper duty, born of his nature.'⁷

3. The third reason is honour. If Arjuna casts aside his duty, he will reap dishonour, and dishonour is worse than death.

"Tis fear has held thee from the battle—so will the lords of

¹ Ibid. ii. 11.

² Ibid. ii. 33; Charpentier, op. cit., p. 8.

³ Bhagavadgita, iii. 5.

⁴ Ibid. iii. 8.

⁵ Ibid. iii. 24.

⁶ Ibid. xviii. 45.

⁷ Ibid. xviii. 42-4.

great cars think; and where thou hast been highly honoured, thou wilt come to light esteem. And many words ill to speak will they speak who wish thee hurt, and mock thy prowess. What can cause greater pain than this?'¹

'Therefore arise, win glory, defeat thy foes, enjoy wide sovereignty!'²

'If one abandon a work, deeming it painful, through fear of bodily suffering, his abandonment is of Energy; he gains not the fruit of abandonment.'³

4. But the work, the action, the deed must not affect the soul. Man must use the world as though he used it not. This is true of the work of the vocation as well as of the work of sacrifice and asceticism. The Gita teaches unworldliness *in* the world.

'If a work of obligation be done simply as a duty, O Arjuna, with abandonment of attachment and of fruit, that abandonment is deemed to be of Purity.'⁴

The mind must be free and undisturbed.

'Hold equal pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat; then gird thyself for the battle; thus shalt thou not gather to thee guilt.'⁵

Duty must be performed with strictness and power, but man should not care for the consequences.

'In work thy rightful interest should lie, nor even in its fruits; let not thy motive be the fruit of work; to no-work let not thy attachment be. Steadfast in control, abandoning attachment, Dhananjaya, do works, viewing with balanced mind success and failure. To be of balanced mind is called control (Bhakti).'⁶

'Whose mind in pains is not disturbed, who is in pleasures void of longing, free from love and fear and wrath, that man is called the man of steadfast thought, the saint.'⁷

What gives the performance of duty its religious value is the complete indifference and liberty of the spirit.

'But he, O Arjuna, is more excellent who checks the senses with the mind, and with the organs of action undertakes, free from attachment, the practice of the method of work.'⁸

¹ Bhagavadgita, ii. 33 sqq.

² Ibid. xi. 33.

³ Ibid. xviii. 8.

⁴ Ibid. xviii. 9.

⁵ Ibid. ii. 38.

⁶ Ibid. ii. 47, 48.

⁷ Ibid. ii. 56.

⁸ Ibid. iii. 7.

The work should be done for God's sake.

'Cast off all works on me, and fix thy thought on the Essential Self; hope thou for naught, and have no thought of Mine; put off thy fever! Fight! The men who ever practise this my teaching, without calumny, men of faith—these are released from works.'¹

'Checking the sense, therefore, in the beginning, cast off, O prince of Bharatas, this thing of sin, that destroys both knowledge and experience.'²

The wise man is not affected by hate and covetousness.

'He to whom pain and pleasure are alike, reliant on himself, holding earth, stones, and gold as equal, holding in level scales things dear and things not dear, a man of wisdom, to whom blame and praise are one; He who holds honour and dishonour equal, equal the friendly party and the foe, abandoning every enterprise—that man is said to have crossed the Strands.'³

'Renouncing with the mind all works, the embodied soul sits happily as master in the city of nine gates.'⁴

'A man should not rejoice at gaining what he loves, nor grieve at gaining what he does not love.'⁵

'The man who does the work that should be done, depending not on fruit of work, is he whose way is renunciation and whose way is practice; not so the fireless man who does no work.'⁶

5. The virtue of a man is resolution.

'Here, O son of Kuru, the judgement is resolution and one; many-branched are the judgements of the irresolute, and without bounds.'⁷

They do not cling to 'joys and lordship' whose judgement is 'resolute or fit for contemplation'.⁸

6. A performance of duty which, unmindful of the fruits of work, is animated by Bhakti, devotion, will gain redemption.

'In work thy rightful interest should lie, nor even in its fruits; let not thy motive be the fruit of work; to no-work let not thine attachment be.'⁹

Nor is he bound any longer by the tinsel of tradition. He is at the goal.

'That man who puts off all desires, and walks without longing, knowing that Mine and I are naught—he comes to peace.'¹⁰

¹ Ibid. iii. 30, 31.

² Ibid. iii. 41.

³ Ibid. xiv. 24, 25.

⁴ Ibid. v. 13.

⁵ Ibid. v. 20.

⁶ Ibid. vi. 1.

⁷ Ibid. ii. 41.

⁸ Ibid. ii. 44.

⁹ Ibid. ii. 47.

¹⁰ Ibid. ii. 71.

How shall we account for this doctrine of duty and vocation? It sprang from the ranks of the warrior caste and may be chiefly accounted for as an *apologia pro vita sua*. Life and society demanded labour. A religion which claimed a man's whole time and prevented him from doing the business which appertained to his rank and calling could not be embraced by all. The Gita bows to hard necessity. These laymen could renounce the salvation and freedom of the soul, but they could not win them according to the Yoga and the monastic ideal. Humanity was urging its claims in India then.

But if we are properly to estimate the Gita we must not imagine that battle is the only question. The same train of thought is applied in the poem to every kind of human action. The Gita urges that religion is compatible with labour and, indeed, that loyalty in one's vocation is irrevocably connected with the salvation of Bhakti.

It is a question whether all the six factors which I have distinguished in the argumentation of the present Gita for the nobleman's loyal performance of duty primarily formed part of the revolt voiced by the poem against the monk and hermit ideal. Schrader, Oldenberg, Jacobi, Charpentier, and others have variously desired to see in the beginning of the second song¹ the original poem in which Krishna challenges Arjuna to fight in the manner of the Vikings. (Charpentier, however, only assumes verses 1-11 and 31-8.)

"Thus, I venture to think, ran the original part of the text upon which, later on, the Bhagavatas built up what is known as the Bhagavadgita. . . . But in these verses, just as little as in those preceding and in canto i, we find not the slightest trace of those doctrines which are characteristic of the present Bhagavadgita. There is not a word here of resignation, of *Yoga*, &c. "Take part in the battle," says Kṛṣṇa, and . . . "Either live and conquer the earth, or die and go to Heaven, the paradise of Indra"—these are the ideals of a chivalrous class and period, in a way strikingly like those of the Scandinavian Viking time when the brave man did either win power and riches or go, sword in hand, to the very material paradise of Valhall."²

¹ Bhagavadgita, ii. 1-38.

² Charpentier, op. cit., p. 9.

V. Grønbech has a lengthy discussion of the teaching of the 'noble' morality on duty and its appreciation of loyalty in the vocation. It may be appropriate to quote him.

'We are once more brought back to the caste of the nobles. These haughty Aryans cannot reconcile themselves to poverty and humility. They cannot get over their contempt for men who eat their food from a beggar's bowl; and poverty is the more contemptible to them, when it is a nobleman who has beggared himself by throwing away his inherited wealth. They are shocked when a nobleman who by his birth is destined not only for independence but for the support of others, begs his way from door to door, a burden to the people. They feel the insufficiency of life and fortune too deeply to be able to dispense with a higher ideal; but they demand a religion which is not at variance with honour and does not take people away from their daily round of duties.

'These ideas and moods broke forth and made a mark in religious practice until one day a man arose who gave shape to the ideas and created a gospel for them. Action, duty, that is thy Yoga, thou noble one. What the humble hermit gains by isolating himself from this world and sinking down into his inner man, thou shalt gain by fighting, ruling, and practising righteousness. Thy deed will be thy Yoga when thou employest it to overcome thy yearning for pleasures and fame, when thou dost not seek thine own, yea, not even to have thy thoughts directed to the satisfaction of pleasing and profiting others, but solely to act in loyalty to the law which is thine honour. Free and unhindered by fear and hope, hate and pity, shalt thou award punishment and reward, maintenance and gifts among thy people and not know any difference of friend and enemy, not seek affection in the one or vengeance for the malice of the other, but deal with the good and the evil according to their merits. Fight the battles of thy people, let thine arm strike hard in the combat but take thine enemy's life without anger or triumph, just as thou takest the service of thy subordinate without enjoying thy power.

'Give large offerings to God as is right and proper for a nobleman, but do it without glorying in thy piety and generosity and without sunning thyself in the pleasure of God. Then thine ethical education, the fulfilment of the obligations of honour, will become an unceasing exercise in giving free play to the action of thy body and the talents of thy mind when outwardly directed, while thine innermost ego remains aloof, in its repose and its

unbroken concern for itself. Used in this way one's work in the community becomes a Yoga whereby a man gains himself. Atman, and not this world. That man is truly free who abandons wealth and joy while sitting on a royal throne, the man who has broken all bonds and loosed his heart from this world, while seeming outwardly to be bound thereto. This is the nobleman's form of self-denial and by doing noble work in war and peace he acquires exactly the same merit as another gains by begging from house to house and sitting in the forest. Amid his care for kin and friends, for citizens and those who are in distress, the nobleman and prince can live the everlasting life in all its captivating fullness.

'With the fine irony of a man of the world this nobleman mocks at the foolish man who thinks to run away from himself by running away from his duties and supposes that lust will die because one has taken its toys away. He has a sharp eye for the self-deceit of those naïve souls who shave their heads and put on a beggar's dress, ere setting out upon their wanderings, while their eyes send covetous glances towards the good things of this world. Desire is not more exalted, as he cuttingly says, when it covets a meal of rice than when it covets a royal throne.'

IV

From this it follows that religion in the proper sense, in the strictest sense, is no longer the privilege of certain people and classes who have left the community and its labour. This Bhakti piety can be practised by all ranks and classes. That which is said at the end of the ninth song was of incalculable consequence to the life and religion of India.

'All beings I regard alike; not one is hateful to me or beloved; but those who with devotion worship me abide in me, and I also in them. . . . For even those, O son of Pritha, who are born of the womb of sin—women, Vaisyas, and Sudras too—if they resort to me, go on the highest way. How much more pure Brahmanas and devout King-sages? Thou who hast gained this world, impermanent and pleasureless, devoutly worship me!'²

Bhakti piety joins in one what were formerly divided, viz. a lofty piety and a lowly position in society. The fear of God bursts the bonds. For this doctrine does not trust in

¹ Grønbech, op. cit., i, pp. 84 sqq.

² Bhagavadgita, ix. 29, 32, 33.

the power of man but in the power of God. So all are welcome, even those who in the view of Brahmanism were excluded from its worship. Religion obtains the possibility of becoming democratic and popular, it is not a privilege of those who have riches or learning. It has room for the eager longing of the heart and does not necessarily lead to the chilly heights, to the All-One; the Gita praises him who is impelled by love. Bhakti devotion is alpha and omega. At the end the poem inculcates:

‘He who shall proclaim among my votaries this mystery supreme, showing towards me supreme devotion, shall surely come to me. Nor among men shall there be any whose service is dearer to me than his; nor on earth shall there be any dearer to me than he.’¹

What shall we say? Nowhere else in India do we meet as here the living God. Warren Hastings was right in writing that of all known religions this comes nearest to Christianity. God has made himself known. He comes close to men. This deity does not demand that man shall finally attain the divine on his endless wandering. Love towards God is here to fill the whole life of man, his daily work as well as his devotional exercises. As we have seen, the task of Yoga is to concentrate the soul on the one thing needful, and to make it free; but God breaks into the self-glorification of the ascetic, asserts his power and calls upon man to embrace him by faith.

The Bhakti-sutras, the outlines of the Bhakti doctrine, are of later date. They bear the name of Sandilya, as we have said. Krishna appears here as the shepherd God, Govinda, and there is mingled in the Bhakti devotion a sensuality which is quite alien to the Gita itself. The Bhakti-sutras with their commentary are of great importance.

Only the longing for salvation enables one to examine the nature of Bhakti. In its highest form Bhakti is devotion directed to a personal god. Its nature is explained as desire, passion. ‘May a passion as strong as the unreflecting man feels for worldly objects never leave my heart which remembers thee!’ quotes a commentator out of Vishnu-

¹ Ibid. xviii. 68, 69.

Purana. Bhakti, faith, is no deed, for it does not depend on any exertion. Therefore its fruit, the bliss of heaven, is never-ending. What is gained by works is corruptible. 'Faith is the essential matter, the rest depends on it.' Knowledge can be the means, but faith and salvation can also be gained without knowledge, as in the case of the shepherd girls. A very Indian objection is made: Faith and devotion should be avoided, for they are emotions of the mind. Answer: No, for it has the highest object. The purity of faith is provoked by tokens—reverence, joy, entire submission, as Bhishma said to Bhagavat, when the latter drew near to slay him: 'Come, lord of the gods, lord of the world, hail to thee who bearest in thine hand bow, club, and sword, kill me with power, thou governor of the world from thy chariot, O thou refuge of living beings in battle.' No new birth awaits the one who knows the births and deeds of the god, accomplished only by his power and dictated by his compassion. The lower Bhakti finds expression in repeating a name, washing the feet of the god, &c. If the heart is present, a single such observance is sufficient. If all else is forsaken a humble deed of worship can blot out great sins. Even the despised castes can learn Bhakti. But only the higher love of God leads to entire deliverance.

For the religious history of India Bhakti piety was of incalculable importance. Alongside the ancient aristocratic programme, salvation by knowledge, and the ascetic zeal, there came forward a democratic programme, salvation by devoted worship. Alongside the Vaidika, versed in the Vedas, there came forward as the man of religion the Guru, the spiritual leader, the head of a sect, the father-confessor with his divine image, his temple, his group of pious people, and his formula.

The ancient gods of the sacrifice did not avail for this higher piety. But gods who had power over the minds of men, and even men who had obtained religious veneration, perhaps even in their lifetime, were given a place in the Bhakti idea of God by the genuinely Indian doctrine of Avatars, the descents of the deity: a conception which aims at fulfilling the need of the human heart of a living deity

who does not dwell beyond the clouds, or can be discerned but in the telescope of abstraction, but has lived upon the earth amid the world of men, is acquainted with their needs and, to some extent, has shared their lot. In the line of Avataras all the figures of religion can find a place if they are deemed worthy. Tolerance knows no bounds. This wide-ness of heart, in later times, has not even denied to Christ a place among the descents of the eternal God. But a fatal weakness in the religion of India is also manifested in this doctrine. It has created new and sublime mysticism, marvellous devotion to God, high ideals, and men who have lived, and live, not for what this earth can give to satisfy their desire for pleasure, power, and riches: men who have not allowed their hearts to be filled by vain thoughts, but live for eternity and in the Eternal. Yet, in spite of the polemic which at all times has prevailed between Veda-believers, i.e. the orthodox schools, and heretical orders and sects, and within these main groups between different doctrines and opinions, one can say, broadly, that India has never had the power to say *No*. The prophetic religion of Israel did so in an Elijah with repulsive and terrifying violence. This is one of the explanations of the difference between the moral and spiritual culture of India and the West. India has allowed low, cruel, sensual, and brutal figures and rites to flourish beside high manifestations of religion. The Avatara doctrine has made this eminently possible. Thus it is the tragedy of India that it has never been able to say *No*, however lovely and sublime we deem that wide-heartedness which acknowledges the divine wherever and however it may appear.

When Islam in Persia, in opposition to the spirit of the Koran, adopted the doctrine of incarnation, revealed religion was, however, influential enough to prevent infinite multiplication of the incarnations.¹

Christianity cannot recognize the doctrine of Avataras, but believes in the only-begotten Son.

The Bhakti of India has, however, by preference been directed to now one, now another of the popular gods.

¹ Christensen, *Mohammedanske Digtere og Tænkere*, p. 77.

'Śiva represents the ascetic, dark, awful, bloody side of religion: Vishnu, the gracious, calm, hopeful, loving side.'¹

Let me quote Barnett once more:

'The legends concerning Krishna-Vasudeva, which are the chief field of Bhakti, seem to be for the most part homogeneous and long antecedent to the Christian era. The worship of the bambino Krishna may perhaps have been stimulated by Christian influences. In the older parts of the Maha-bharata Krishna is merely a legendary hero; in the second stratum, the basis of the present recension of the epos, he is the Supreme, incarnate as an earthly prince. The period of this latter recension seems to lie between the fourth and the first centuries B.C. The chief doctrine implied in it is embodied in the Bhagavad-gita, and the leading churches maintaining it are the Satvatas, Bhagavatas, and Pancharatras, many of whose ancient scriptures are still extant, and demand critical study. Much of it was codified in the theology of Ramanuja (twelfth century A.D.), whose theory of *vyuhas* is essentially the same as that propounded in the Maha-bharata, which again appears to be based upon an Upanishadic idea. This theory shows a fundamental trait of Bhakti—the elevation of originally epic heroes (Sankarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Vasudeva) to a place in a spiritual hierarchy, where they are worshipped with an emotional cult. Traces of the same process are manifest in the inscription of Ghasundi (c. 250 B.C.).'²

The Krishna cult has produced an endless literature varying from the ethical loftiness of Bhagavadgita to a sensual luxuriance which to save its reputation and avoid being offensive, has to be symbolically interpreted, like the Song of Solomon and the outpourings of St. Bernard, Zinzendorf, and the Moravian brothers.³

In the school of Caitanya, a visionary Brahman in Bengal, who proclaimed himself to be an incarnation of Krishna,⁴ the doctrine of Bhakti got this elaborate form:

'Through Bhakti—abandonment to God and abandonment of all worldly interests—one grows into *Rati* which can be translated by sincere, burning devotion, passionate yearning; when this

¹ Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 414.

² Barnett, *op. cit.*, pp. 48–9.

³ Kennedy, *Child Krishna, Christianity, and the Gujars*, p. 951; Lala Baijnath, *Modern Hindu Religion and Philosophy*, pp. 145 sqq.

⁴ Barth, *Religions of India*, p. 233.

Rati obtains contact with its object, it becomes *Rasa*, deep feeling, and by diligent use of the name of God with song and dancing it is deepened into *Prema* or love. But within the borders of love there are five degrees according as it increases in passionateness. Rati has five different tones of feeling and, consequently, five stages according as one, or more, or all the moods are present in the soul. The first stage consists in a man having a longing only for Krishna and turning his soul entirely towards him, so that he cares neither for salvation nor heaven, indeed, he reckons them as on a par with hell. At this stage already Rati passes into *Prema* but this is quite colourless, without the enjoyment of feeling, as it manifests itself in tears and the quaking of the body, when the person, as yet, has only seen Krishna as the perfect spirit, as deity. At the second stage he feels that he is the servant of God and delights to glorify him and to do his will, i.e. to sing his praise. At the third stage he feels freedom and confidence enough to associate with God as friend; he plays with God, he rides on his back or God rides on him. He wrestles and races with him for fun. He not only serves God, but lets God serve him, for there is no longer any distance between them or difference of rank. At the fourth stage tenderness enters into the relation; the person feels like God's father or mother, watching over and protecting the child. Finally, at the fifth stage, all these feelings coalesce in their highest form and are united with the lover's surrender of his body in the service of love. Then are manifested the true tokens of the life in God. The person is overwhelmed by tears and his body quakes for joy. In this schedule the Krishna legend serves as a reader in psychology; the various phases of tenderness and love are depicted by the aid of Krishna playing with his mother, with his companions, the boys and girls of the village, and finally with Radha, his mistress before all others. At the highest stage there are two degrees again. At the lower of these the person sees the joy of the maidens in helping their playfellow Radha to the embrace of Krishna and at the sight of their love in the harbour. At the higher stage he himself tastes the sweetness of union, as Radha.¹

The Bhakti that is directed towards Shiva has a sterner character. The hymns of the great Tamil poet Manikka Vasagar on the contrition of the sinner and the mercy of Shiva and the joy of the saved man when he worships his god might, in part, be read from a Christian pulpit, if the

¹ Grønbech, op. cit., pp. 198-9.

name of the god were removed. The poet relates personal memories of the power and glory and grace of Shiva.¹

An important part is played in the Shiva religion by the image of the dancing god. The Bhakti of the enraptured worshippers is directed to this statue, as in the West to an image of the Madonna.

'In the Periapurana it is related of Kanappen that while out shooting he found an abandoned statue of Shiva, and forgetting the world and himself out of love towards Shiva he put himself entirely to the service of the Shiva statue and even sacrificed his eyes in this service.'²

Partly in reaction from the tremendously increased popularity of Krishna, the old aristocratic religion has made some advance of late years, especially in the Tamil country of South India.

The stories of Rama and the love of him and his consort are marked by a pure and touching warmth, forming a healthy contrast to the obscene sensualities of the Krishna-worship. They are not myths, but legends, not cult legends but a kind of good tidings concerning a figure who probably traces back to an historical hero. India may be congratulated on owning, in addition to the ancient epos of Ramayana, also Tulsi Das's feeling poem which lives on the lips of millions. Heiler sums up the development:

'Into these cool rivers of the Indian divine speculation born of the meditation and absorption the warm streams of Bhakti empty themselves, of devotion, of love, of confident trust. "Our whole life is nothing but grace"—this Augustinian confession might be put as motto for the personal divine mysticism of India. Its tune begins to sound softly in the Bhagavadgita, it grows more distinct in Yamana Muni, in powerful chords it swells through the theological writings of Ramanuja, but its most wonderful tones we hear from the stotras of the Mahayana Buddhists and the hymns of praise of the hinduistic Bhaktas, of Manikka Vasagar, Namdev, Tukaram, Kabir, and Tulsi Das. It would often be possible to put the Christian instead of the Indian name of God or Saviour, and few Christians would be aware that pious

¹ Larsen, *Hindu-Aandsliv*, pp. 125 sqq.; Pope, *The Tiruvaçagam*, p. 311; Schomerus, *Die Hymnen des Mānikka Vaçaga*, pp. 171-2.

² Schomerus, *Çaiva-Siddhanta*, p. 368.

"heathens" praise their god in such words. The great theme of these songs of praise is the wonder of salvation and grace: the sinful soul is chosen by the loving God, who draws it out of its depravation and admits it to the blissful union with God.¹

As a proof of the generous feeling of the Bhakti religion for other religions let me quote the 'Evening Hymn', by Sarojini Naidu. Is it consciously that she mentions objects of worship only from the four religions of revelation: Islam, Christianity, Parseeism, and Bhakti?

Allah ho Akhbar! Allah ho Akhbar!
 From mosques and from minars the muczzins are calling!
 O, make your devotions, ye children of Islam!
 Swiftly the shadows of evening are falling.
 Allah ho Akhbar! Allah ho Akhbar!

Ave Maria! Ave Maria!
 Devoutly the priests of the altar are singing.
 Ye who do worship the Son of the Virgin,
 Make your orisons. The vespers are ringing.
 Ave Maria! Ave Maria!

Ahura Mazda! Ahura Mazda!
 How the sonorous Avestan is flowing!
 Ye who to flame and the Light make obeisance,
 Bend low where the quenchless blue torches are glowing
 Ahura Mazda! Ahura Mazda!

Naray-yana! Naray-yana!
 Hark to the ageless, divine invocation!
 Lift up your heads, O ye children of Brahma!
 Lift up your voices in rapt adoration!
 Naray-yana! Naray-yana!

But the most remarkable chapter of Bhakti belongs to the history of Buddhism.

¹ Heiler, *Die Mission des Christentums in Indien*, p. 11.

V

RELIGION WITH A 'SALVATION FACT'.

MAHAYANA. BHAKTI IN BUDDHISM

EVEN in the early Buddhist Order, besides the doctrine of self-salvation through insight into suffering and its annihilation, there was a religious element which formed a link with Bhakti salvation. I mean the monk's reverence for the master and his devotion to the three treasures, Triratna. One of the reasons why Buddhism had an incomparably greater future than the contemporary Jina Order lies in its trinity. The monk takes refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha.

I

The advantage of Buddhism lies in each of the elements of its 'three treasures': (1) *Buddha*, the personality of the founder; (2) *Dharma*, the doctrine, the way of salvation, outlined with psychological truth and delicacy, and its underlying philosophy; and (3) *Samgha*, the monastic order, the congregation, with frequent meetings for confession and a warm feeling of solidarity. In these three the novice takes refuge as in a religious power and protection, manifest in life. I mean that in the words of initiation or creed of the Buddhist: 'I take refuge' or 'I believe in Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha', there is already a kind of Bhakti, 'devotion', although it was not until much later that Bhakti piety gained admittance into Buddhism, in Mahayana, as devotion to a personal Buddha divinity and to the countless deified holy men in various ages.

The trinity, *triratna*, occupies even in the original Buddhism (Hinayana, 'the lesser vehicle', the egoistic self-salvation), a position in some degree analogous to a divinity. This trinity is by no means an accident; it must needs belong to higher religion. For in its doctrine of salvation there are always three elements. Who, or what, is it that saves man from his misery? In other words, what is to him the highest good? The Religion of revelation answers: God. Christianity

says: The Father of Jesus Christ and our heavenly Father. Original Buddhism has no divinity in the religious sense. But there is help for man in his need. And that is Dharma, the doctrine, insight into the nature of existence and instruction as to how man shall escape from suffering and gain the everlasting peace of Nirvana. Dharma is really for Buddhism the first article of faith which, in accordance with Buddha's words to his disciples, when they were troubled at his departure, shall remain, to be preached, inculcated, and followed by them, when he is no longer present. They must not depend utterly on him but regard the doctrine as their teacher, leader, and comforter. Dharma is God.

'Somebody, O mendicants, is following me holding the edge of my garment . . . but he is far from me and I am far from him. Why? For he has not seen the Doctrine; and not having seen the Doctrine he does not see me either. Somebody lives at a distance of a hundred yojanas. . . . He is close to me and I am close to him. Why? For he has seen the Doctrine, and having seen the Doctrine he has seen also me.'¹

The second question is: Who revealed the salvation? Christianity answers: Christ, the Son. The Buddhist Order answers: Siddhartha, who became a Buddha, an 'Enlightened One', aware of the way of salvation. Christ is more essential to Christianity than Buddha is to Buddhism, but both fill the same place as mediators of saving truth.

The third question runs: What is accomplished by the revelation which the revealer reveals? Christianity answers: The congregation, the Church, where the Spirit, through the means of grace, imparts forgiveness of sins and eternal life. The answer of Buddhism is: The monastic order, Samgha, the intimate circle of disciples, where by means of mutual confession they help one another to follow the doctrine and the Teacher and come to Nirvana.

At the Congress for the History of Religions at Oxford in 1908 I endeavoured to elaborate this observation in my paper on 'The place of the Christian Trinity and the Buddhist Triratna amongst holy Triads.'²

¹ Itivuttaka, 105; cf. Minayeff, *Recherches sur le bouddhisme*, p. 218.

² *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, ii, pp. 391-410.

II

Even the refuge in Triratna thus contains an element which weans the adepts of self-salvation from mere occupation with themselves and leads them to contemplate something objective, (1) a saving doctrine, (2) a teacher, (3) an order of monks and nuns in this world. And, indeed, self-salvation had received much earlier at the beginning of Buddha's career a still harder blow from the great and happy inconsistency of Buddha himself.

When Siddhartha, on the bank of Neranjara, had seen clearly the way of salvation, two of the treasures were already present, viz. Buddha, the Enlightened One, and the law, the doctrine, the rule, the instruction as to the way of salvation, the four noble truths, Dharma. Buddha now turned to the five hermits who had first admired his self-torture and then taken offence when he forsook them. They were in the neighbourhood of Benares. He preached to them the Benares sermon on the Golden Middle Way to Nirvana, in contrast to the two extremes of worldliness and violent self-torture. Other monks joined him. And now the third treasure or jewel, Ratna, was present, viz. Samgha, the monastic order, the congregation, the third refuge of Buddhism.

Trust in Triratna, the doctrine, the revealer, and the congregation or church, finds striking correspondence in those circles within certain Christian Churches who believe in the Church and may be very clerical, but think it adventurous or too hard for a modern man to believe in God.

When Buddha gained Sambodhi, the perfect saving insight into the way to Nirvana, it became a temptation to him. The temptations related in the Gospel and in Tripitaka have been compared, but the essential point has been forgotten. Just as Christ's temptation was the necessary consequence of his assurance that he was the Messiah, so it is possible to trace out in the canon of the Buddhist Order Siddhartha's own vocational temptation from the motley assemblage of temptation stories.

As long as the motives underlying the temptation in the Gospel are only regarded as the desire for bread in the

wilderness of a hungry self-castigator and the lust for worldly greatness of one who had forsaken the world, one is blind to their real meaning. They find their explanation in the newly gained assurance of Jesus that he was the Messiah. But in contrast to the experience of Buddha, the source of the Messiah-temptation was not the assurance that Jesus had gained as to his vocation, but rather the Messianic expectations of the nation. If he was Christ, he ought to convince by miracles those who awaited a matchless miracle-worker, nor ought he to disappoint those who were longing for a deliverer from a foreign yoke and a restorer of the kingdom of David. The dream of national liberty employed by the opponents of Jesus before Pilate as an accusation against Jesus had been by him rejected as a temptation.

Nor is the temptation in the Gospel one single episode. The story of the temptation reflects an inner struggle which in various forms assailed the soul of Jesus until the end. As Spitta remarks, St. Luke does not seem to place all three temptations in the sojourn in the wilderness after the baptism, but actually takes Jesus up on to a mountain and afterwards on to the pinnacle of the Temple. Was not the temptation to change stones into bread and to cast himself down from the lofty temple, repeated when some of the scribes and Pharisees demanded of him a sign?¹ Did not the temptation of the earthly ideal kingdom return when people had seen the sign which Jesus performed at Tiberias as related in St. John vi: 'Jesus . . . perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, withdrew . . . into the mountain himself alone.'² The Gospel of St. Luke is right in saying: 'And when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season',³ only for a season. There is room in a human life, and so too in the life of Jesus, for the repetition of a temptation. The tempter was not decked out with horns and hoofs. Once he appeared in the guise of a beloved disciple.⁴ Towards the end, the difficulty of cleaving to the Father's will without mistrust was intensified, 'Father, save me from this hour',⁵ and in Gethsemane,

¹ St. Matt. xii. 38.³ St. Luke, iv. 13.⁴ St. Matt. xvi. 23.² St. John, vi. 15.⁵ St. John, xii. 27.

'If it be possible, let this cup pass away from me.'¹ Every temptation overcome has its reward. The Gospel seals the victory with these beautiful words: 'Then the devil leaveth him and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.'² The same held good in India, too, some centuries before the Son of Mary. Sutta-Nipâta has preserved it. There it is said in Padhana-sutta 15 of the power of the tempter: 'None but a hero conquers it and after conquering it obtains joy.'³

In addition to the universal temptations of human life at its different ages, every vocation and rank of life has its special temptations. The view that the Buddha and Messiah temptations have a common derivation ignores what is characteristic in both. Even if no accounts of these temptations had been preserved, we should believe that both Jesus and Buddha had been tempted. And we should be compelled to derive the temptation to fall in with current Messianic ideals from the Messianic assurance which was realized in so undreamt-of a manner, just as Buddha's love-filled inconsistency with regard to the saving insight he had obtained could not be realized without an inner struggle and mastery of self. The real vocational temptation was for Buddha a double one. The consequence of his doctrine of salvation urged him first, for his own part, to enter into Nirvana, peace, and then refrains from proclaiming his doctrine.

When the monk under the tree drank to the bottom the bliss of a liberating insight, it became a temptation. According to the book of the great death, Maha-parinibbana-sutta, Buddha himself related it to his favourite disciple Ananda when, to the despair of the disciple, he was about to leave this world and enter into Nirvana.

'Once, Ananda, I was staying at Uruvela on the strand of the river Neranjara under the ayapala fig-tree, immediately after I had attained the highest insight (*sambodhi*). Then, O Ananda, Mara the evil one came where I was; he stepped forward to my side and, standing by my side, Mara the evil one said to me: Into Nirvana shall now, Lord, the holy one enter, into Nirvana the blessed one; now, Lord, it is time for the holy one to enter into Nirvana.'

¹ St. Matt. xxvi. 39.

² St. Matt. iv. 11.

³ Sutta-Nipâta, iii. 2. 15.

'After that speech, O Ananda, I said to Mara, the evil one, as follows: "I shall not go into Nirvana, thou evil one, before I have monks as hearers, wise, disciplined, experienced, well-informed, who possess the doctrine of salvation, who have the calm corresponding to the doctrine of salvation; not until these themselves, after commencing their teaching office, impart, proclaim, teach, determine, explain, expound, correct; not until they proclaim the doctrine of salvation with tokens of wonder, after having suppressed the protests of others which can be suppressed by the aid of the doctrine of salvation.

' "I shall not go into Nirvana, thou evil one, until I have nuns as hearers, wise, disciplined. . . .

' "I shall not go into Nirvana, thou evil one, until I have lay-brothers as hearers, wise, disciplined. . . .

' "I shall not go into Nirvana, thou evil one, until I have lay-sisters as hearers, wise, disciplined. . . .

' "I shall not go into Nirvana, thou evil one, until this irreproachable conduct of mine has succeeded and bloomed, widespread, known to many and richly multiplied, so that it has been beautifully manifested to men." ¹

The master's story suffers, as is usual in Indian writings, from too great particularity and a finicking attention to detail which betrays but little of the inner struggle and victory which laid the foundation of Buddha's work. This temptation story is awkwardly inserted into the situation of the last days before the death. When Ananda² left the master's side for a moment, Mara, the evil one, came and drew the undeniable conclusion: Now the holy one has got 'monks for disciples, wise, disciplined, experienced, full of insight', &c., now he has got nuns, lay-brothers and lay-sisters, now his path has been revealed to men for their profit and salvation. The holy one ought now therefore to enter into Nirvana. The only answer that Buddha could make to this argument was that his Nirvana would really soon commence, after three months. When Ananda returned to the place where the holy man was and asked for an explanation of the earthquake that he had just witnessed, Buddha disclosed to him the reason: his own resolve to enter Nirvana, and spoke of Mara's visitation—both the temptation soon after salvation had

¹ Maha-Parinibbana-Sutta, iii. 34 sqq.

² Ibid. iii. 7 sq.

dawned upon him on the strand of Nerañjara and the exhortation which the Evil One had now renewed to him, with better results, to seek the perfect rest of Nirvana in death.

The attempt of Mara to hinder Buddha's activity after he had gained enlightenment and to prevail upon him to enter Nirvana are referred to elsewhere in Buddhist literature. Divyavadana relates in Sanskrit the same two temptations which are told in the Pali language in Maha-parinibbana-sutta, one at the beginning of the Buddhaship, one at the end of his life. A parallel or copy of Mara's earlier Nirvana temptation is found in one of the great Sanskrit biographies, Lalita Vistara. At the close of Buddha's activity Mara appears with the same exhortation in the Pali writing Udana.¹ It is manifest that the mere mention of the organization of the Order, performed gradually by the master and, in the case of the nuns only after profound hesitation, forbids us to put into Buddha's mouth or heart immediately after Sambodhi the words whereby in Maha-parinibbana-sutta the temptation is propounded and rejected. The episode gives no impression of originality. But this does not prevent it from having an underlying reality.

We see it better in the Mahavagga story of Buddha's hesitation in preaching the doctrine. In this book from the Vinaya collection the course of events is similar except that Mara is absent from the temptation, the latter being described as an inclination in Buddha's own soul, inevitably provoked by the insight just gained under the fig-tree as to the way to the abolition of suffering. Instead of the Evil One, the Lord of the Brahma heaven, the highest Brahma, is brought into the scene. It is related how the Holy One, after the seven nights' blissful absorption in the newly gained insight, betook himself from the rayajātana tree to the foot of the ajapala fig-tree where, in his solitude, the following thought arose in his mind:²

“I have experienced this deep truth, hard to understand, hard to see, rich in peace, lofty, unattainable for the mind, of deep significance, comprehensible but to the wise. Man is busy in worldly striving; in worldly striving he finds his lust and his

¹ Windisch, *Mara und Buddha*, p. 35.

² Mahavagga, i. 5.

refuge. For mankind busy in worldly striving, that finds its lust and refuge in worldly striving, this matter will be hard to comprehend, viz. the law of causation, the chain of causes and effects. And this matter, too, will be hard for them to comprehend, viz. the expunging of all latent impressions, the deliverance from all earthly substratum (existence), the dying-out of desire, the cessation of suffering, the end, Nirvana. If I now proclaim the doctrine and am not understood, it will only bring me weariness, only bring me labour."

'And in the soul of the Holy One, without astonishing him, there rose up the following verse which no one before had ever perceived:

Why reveal to the world what I in conflict have won?

From covetous and hate-filled men the doctrine is concealed.

A mystery deep and arduous, unseen by coarser minds,

'Tis not beheld by him whose soul is veiled in folly's night.

"Thinking so, the mind of the Holy One was inclined to remain in peace and not to preach the doctrine. Then Brahma Sahampati comprehended with his soul the innermost thought of the Holy One and thought to himself: "The world will truly perish, the world will surely quite perish, if the heart of Tathāgata, the holy, highest Buddha is inclined for rest and not to preach the doctrine."

"Then Brahma Sahampati left the Brahma world and appeared to the Holy One as quickly as a strong man stretches out his bent arm or bends his outstretched arm.

"Then Brahma Sahampati bared one of his shoulders and doffing his outer garment, he lowered his right kneecap to the earth, raised his clasped hands towards the Holy One and spoke to the Holy One as follows: "Lord, let the Holy One preach the doctrine, let the perfect one preach the doctrine. There are beings that are almost free from the dust of earth, but will perish if they do not hear the preaching of the doctrine. These will understand the doctrine." . . .

"For the second time Brahma Sahampati said to the Holy One: "Lord, let the Holy One preach the doctrine, let the perfect one preach the doctrine. There are beings who are almost free from the dust of earth but they will perish if they do not hear the doctrine preached. These will understand the doctrine."'

But, for the second time, the Holy One declared his hesitation. Then the god Brahma made his supplication for the third time.

"Then the Holy One, having heard Brahma's exhortation and

being seized with compassion for living creatures, gazed with a Buddha's eye over the world. And the Holy One who gazed out over the world with the eyes of a Buddha saw beings whose eyes were dimmed with but a little earthly dust and beings whose eyes were dimmed by much earthly dust; beings with acute senses and beings with dull senses; of noble character and ignoble character; hard to instruct and easy to instruct; he saw many among them who lived in fear of the coming life and of sin. . . . And when he saw them thus, he turned to Brahma Sahampati with the following verse:

For all be opened the portals of eternity,
 Let him with ears hear the word with faith.
 Afraid of toil, I kept from men
 The bright and noble word, O Brahma.

'Then Brahma Sahampati understood: "the Holy One has granted my request and will preach the doctrine." Then he bowed to the Holy One, passed around him with his right side turned toward him, and immediately vanished from his sight.'

The text here given is remarkable. If Buddha had followed the insight he had gained, he would have known how to enjoy the peace of Nirvana in sweet solitude, as far from the striving of the world as from fierce self-torture. To mix with men, to submit to toil and suffer bitter disappointment, was more than needless; it was opposed to the Buddha insight and must disturb the peace of mind of the enlightened one. Deviation from the doctrine, serious even from the standpoint of consistency, held nothing enticing even to the natural desire of man. Yet love and compassion prevailed. Moreover, consistency, that obedience to the doctrine which would bring peace to the mind, was regarded as a temptation. In Mahavagga this view of the conception of the egoistic enjoyment of Nirvana as an evil temptation is not yet present. But the conception presents itself as a self-evident consequence of the saving insight. Only in the Maha-parinibbana-sutta is the Evil One brought into the arena. But the later text which here represents perhaps an earlier tradition makes the god-king of heaven plead the cause of compassion and persuade the master, who had been newly endowed with the Buddha insight, voluntarily to give up the peace of the soul for the salvation of men. We may indeed agree with the

author that the great inconsistency of Buddha was of celestial origin.

The duplication by tradition of the same temptation may have some justification in so far as a thought so natural to the Buddhahood as the needlessness of undertaking the trouble of preaching may well have asserted itself more than once. A temptation is never overcome once for all. It would be possible to discover, if one desired, two different reasons for the temptation to hesitate in coming forward, viz. in the Mara episode, *parinirvāṇa*—the sense of the worthlessness of life and the peace of the insight obtained; in the Brahma episode, *brahmayachana*—the thought of the powerlessness of men to comprehend the doctrine. At any rate, the temptation is the same in both episodes as regards its content.

In his acute and notable analysis E. Tuneld gives a survey of the various versions of the Buddha biography for the period from the saving insight until the interference of Brahma provoked by Buddha's hesitancy to preach.¹ He collocates fourteen versions of *brahmayachana*. We have already in Mahavagga read the causes of Buddha's decision not to preach: the doctrine is too deep to be comprehended by mankind and its preaching would only bring him toil and trouble. What finally caused him to waver was the thought, aroused by Brahma Sahampati, of beings who were almost free from earthliness, but still must perish unless they heard of the saving insight. The reference is to those who had been driven from home to homelessness in seeking peace for their souls.

In spite of embellishments, enlargements, and repetitions, the groundwork of all the versions is the same and coincides, as Tuneld has shown, with the Mahavagga text.

God gained the victory over man. The love of men and compassion with their lot in the world, i.e. the divine in Siddharta, overcame the longing of his own soul to gain peace alone. The greatness of Buddha and Buddhism lies in this inconsistency.

Mahayana, 'the great vehicle', which has room for many and not only for one's own self, directs the mind to the divine

¹ Tuneld, *Recherches*, pp. 123-90.

and to the human and does not remain in the narrow circle of the four holy truths. This Mahayana with its gods and heavens and its worship has become something very different from the ring of disciples around the master and immediately after him; and, in order to win adherents, Mahayana has, consciously or unconsciously, included superstitious conceptions and cult practices alien to original Buddhism. Anyhow, Mahayana embodies a doctrine which raises it above self-salvation, and it can point to the master's own fateful inconsistency. The race is grateful to him and the multitude of deified Buddhas and Bodhisattvas because he overcame the temptation.

III

We shall not here dwell on the process by which atheistic Buddhism became at least as rich in divinities and images of God as any other religion. We will, however, notice a feature lying in the line of the Bhakti doctrine but not yet found in Bhagavadgita. Mahayana builds its assurance of salvation *on a fact of history*. Otherwise, the saving fact is what marks out Biblical religion in contrast to other forms of faith. Oddly enough, it has an instructive parallel in Mahayana, in the doctrine of the vow or vows of Buddha.

Mystic practice was outbidden in the very circumstance that Buddha in Mahayana became a god to trust in and to worship. However different the situation became when, among the host of competing religions around the Mediterranean, one Lord and Saviour outstripped all the others, and deep as was the gulf between Buddha's teaching and the Good News, the Gospel, yet it was the strength of Buddhism as of Christianity, that the one who became the object of worship was an *historic personality*, about whose life and teaching and fate much was known, and not a mythical hero such as Krishna, 'the cunning warrior, shepherd and love-knight'¹ who became one of the avataras, 'descents' of Vishnu, the everlasting god of salvation, and the darling of Bhakti religion. Buddha became in the happy phrase of de la Vallée Poussin 'un dieu à biographie'.²

¹ Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden*, p. 337.

² De la Vallée Poussin, *Bouddhisme*, p. 226.

Mahayana soon made Buddha the object of divine worship. In Lalita Vistara, the voluminous Buddha legend which, while properly belonging to Hinayana, still, owing to its important Mahayanic elements, forms a part of the sacred writings of Mahayana, Bhakti, the devotion, worship of Buddha, is recommended. To him, the Wise, the lion of the Sakya dynasty, man must hold fast. On him he must depend, for he is the lord of the wise, the ocean of knowledge, the lord of the doctrine, *dharma*, the all-knowing, the God above all gods. To him belongs the worship of men and gods, to him who rules over the doctrine and is his own origin. One of the titles of honour of Brahma, Svayambhu, is here granted to Buddha. All are exhorted to approach the Buddha of the immeasurable insight. Among the characteristics of Mahayana none is more important than Bhakti, the devotion and divine worship given to Buddha.¹ A Brahman converted to Buddhism in Ceylon in the middle of the thirteenth century, Ramacandra Kavibharati, dedicated to Buddha a poem to which he gave the name 'a hundred verses on Bhakti', Bhakti-Sataka.²

Who is more worthy of divine worship than he who sacrificed his own bliss for the salvation of the beings, men and gods and all living things? The divine worship of Mahayana was not limited to Sakyamuni, but has been gradually extended to innumerable Buddhas and candidates for the Buddha dignity, Bodhisattvas, the most remarkable of whom is 'the gracious down-gazing lord', Avalokitesvara, who became the national god of Tibet.

One of the books of Mahayana³ gives the following account of the resolve and vow of the Bodhisattva to save all beings:

'And I take upon myself the burden of all sufferings, I am resolved to do so, I bear them. I turn not back, I do not flee, I quake not, neither do I tremble. I fear not, I yield not, nor do I hesitate. And why? Because I must take upon me the burden of all beings. It is not my free will. The deliverance of all beings is my solemn vow; all beings will have to be delivered by me.

¹ Winternitz, *Der Mahayana-Buddhismus*, pp. 2, 5.

² Ed. by Haraprasada Shastri, *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society*, i, 1893, pp. 21 sqq.; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

³ Śāntideva, *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, pp. 280 sqq.

By me must the whole world of living creatures be delivered. From the wilderness of birth, from the wilderness of age, from the wilderness of sickness, from the wilderness of death, from the wilderness of all kinds of misfortune, from the wilderness of the evil forms of existence, from the wilderness of the entire circulation of rebirths, from the wilderness of all heresies, from the wilderness of the loss of the good religion, from the wilderness arising out of uncertainty, from all these wildernesses I must save all beings. . . . I work for the establishment of the incomparable kingdom of knowledge for all beings. I take pains not only for my own redemption. For all these beings must be brought by me from the river of Samsara in the boat of thought to omniscience. From the great abyss I must raise them, from all calamities I must deliver them, I must lead them out from the river of Samsara. I must take upon myself the whole burden of the sufferings of all beings. As far as I am able, I will taste all the sufferings of all the evil forms of existence as they are borne in all parts of the world. And no being must be deceived by me as to the root of the good. I have resolved to live in every single evil form of existence for countless millions of ages. And as in one evil form of existence, so there is reason for me to deliver all beings in all the evil forms of existence without exception in whatever part of the world they occur. And why? It is surely better that I alone suffer than that all beings should come to the places of the evil existence. . . . And, likewise, I must bring the roots of the good to maturity that all beings may attain to unending happiness, undreamt of happiness, the happiness of omniscience—with me as driver, with me as guide, with me as torch-bearer, with me as guide to salvation, with me who found the path at the right moment, with me, who know the means, with me, who know the advantages . . . with me as guide to the farther strand.¹

Here we are far from the original Dharma. Instead of the individual's path to the painlessness of Nirvana, the new ideal is now, while following Buddha and Bodhisattva, to take upon oneself all suffering so that the suffering beings may be saved. Many virtues there are, but one stands above all. That is pity. Whoever has taken to himself this single virtue and yielded himself entirely to it becomes the possessor of all the Buddha virtues without more ado.

¹ Winternitz, op. cit., pp. 34-5.

When faith in God and care for one's fellow-men have gained such place and power in religion, the reign of self-salvation is at an end.

The remarkable history of Mahayana is not yet written. For this a vast amount of work will be needed to establish the time, composition, mutual relations, and vicissitudes of the Mahayana texts in the Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, Chinese, and Japanese languages.

On its royal road Buddha Bhakti came with Mahayana to China, where the school of the Land of Purity, *Sukhavati*, Chinese *Tsing-tu*, had a great importance. Its founder, Nagarjuna, began Mahayana's victorious progress in the second century A.D. The Amitabha of this school has become if not a monotheistic still a kind of supreme Deity. Amitabha is the merciful Father to whom innumerable monks and nuns in the Far East turn and for centuries have turned with the formula: 'Reverently and confidently I take refuge in Amitabha.' Besides him the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, in China called Kwanyin, gained extraordinary importance first as a male, then as a female divinity. Kwanyin is 'the gracious down-gazing Lord' and is also called the son of Amitabha. The female Kwanyin is often represented as blessing a praying monk. Another Bodhisattva, Maitreya, Chinese Milfo, will appear as savior at the end of this age when the power of Evil has reached its highest development and all living creatures are menaced by ruin through sin and misery. He is reproduced as a genial, friendly figure. Further, the Mahayana of China has a copious pantheon of gods of various ranks, i.e. Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Arhats, and others after Indian pattern.

Buddha Bhakti has flourished most vigorously in Japan. Worship of the Buddha-god had been previously taught by Buddhist priests in Japan,¹ but they gained no adherents.

Buddhism in Japan did not become the popular religion, the comfort and instruction of millions, until the introduction of Jodo-shu by the pious, upright, and patriotic preacher Honen, who met with great success both at court and among the masses of the people. In consequence of the jealousy of

¹ Haas, *Amida Buddha*, p. 12.

other teachers, however, he was banished from the country and some of his disciples suffered martyrdom. His ideal was Sukhavati, in Japanese Jodo, i.e. 'Western land of Purity' whither every man, learned or unlearned, from every class of society, even the lowest, by faith in the infinite grace of the Buddha-god, Amitabha, the Japanese Amida, can be delivered from the misery of the world and of sin.

This Genku or Honen had five times read through the five thousand volumes of Tripitaka when he paused to consider a work, a commentary of the Chinese Buddhist monk Zendo who at the beginning of the seventh century preached Amitabha, the Buddha-god, and the 'highest bliss' won by his invocation in Sukhavati, the paradise in the West. Genku obtained a sudden insight one day when reading over again the words: 'Think above all of the name of Amitabha with whole and undivided heart.' Forsaking all the religious exercises and pious works which for years he had performed, he began to repeat the name of Buddha Amitabha sixty thousand times a day. This was in the year 1175. So there arose in Japan in the year 1175 'the sect of the land of purity', Jodo-shu.¹

The great Spanish missionary, St. Francis Xavier, (died 1552), observed that most of the Japanese invoke Amida (Amitabha). The Jesuit missionaries found in Japan 'the Lutheran heresy'. That is comprehensible, for the schools just mentioned inculcate energetically and consistently that man cannot gain salvation by his own works. All depends on faith. One must put one's full trust in the promise of Amitabha, the Buddha-god. Help lies absolutely beyond the reach of man in the inconceivable compassion of Amitabha.

1. God's grace becomes all; the merits and capacity, the practice and work of man, are valueless. In numberless turns of speech this doctrine of grace is inculcated in the extensive literature of Mahayana and particularly of Jodo-shin. I borrow the translations from Haas's fine collection of documents.

'Invoking the mercy of Buddha as often as we can we shall seek

¹ Haas, *Amida Buddha*, p. 11.

to enter Life only by the strength of another, i.e. by his help. For it would be impossible to reach this goal by our own strength, however much we may invoke.'

'He who still strives to perform the good by his own strength he is not included in the primary vow of Amida. But he who turns his heart, which still is full of confidence in his own strength, and humbly puts his whole trust in the strength of a helper, he may be assured that he will reach the true life as a reward. We cannot free ourselves from the Samsara through achievements of any other kind, we who are fettered by the desires of the flesh. And since Amida out of pity for us has made up his mind, his purpose from the very beginning has been to help such sinners to attain to the Buddhaship. Therefore such sinners who put their trust in the strength of another shall enter Life in the first line. And thus the word is true which says: "If the good are to enter Life, how much more will the sinners do so!"'¹

The invocation in itself does not help man. It is true that our calling on the holy name Amida is a due sign of our gratitude to the Lord for all his blessings, to him who releases us from the miserable circuit of births. But the invocation of the powerful name must not be regarded as an accomplishment. Nor has our feeling decisive importance. Our confidence ought to create in us joy and firmness. But this feeling often fails.

Means to awaken and strengthen the faith are mentioned:

'1. To attend a teacher's school in order to learn valuable doctrines.

'2. To search the holy doctrine and think over its meaning.

'3. To have intercourse with religiously minded friends and constantly speak with them of the future world.

'4. To pray with soft voice one's *Namu Amida Butsu*.

'5. To make one's inner man clear to oneself and to become fully conscious of the sinfulness of one's whole action and thus to strengthen more and more the faith in the primary vow while bearing in mind how wonderful it is that one in spite of all is not cast out from this vow.'²

The path that runs between the abysses of perdition is terribly narrow. Faintheartedness hinders us on the way to Life. But we must not estimate the salvation after the joy of

¹ Shinran; Haas, op. cit., p. 125.

² Koa Shonin; Haas, op. cit., p. 100.

the heart or the strength of our longing for salvation. Nor is our devotion a sure sign.

'It is an error from the very beginning if somebody believes that he is capable of true devotion in his hour of death by his own strength. For it is generally so that a man in his last moments not only feels the pains caused by his illness, but that besides comes the unbearable suffering of death. . . . That is a moment when both the spirit of the dying man is powerless, however he may exert himself, and no other human power can give him aid.'¹

Even our faith in the vow is a divine gift.

Every form of holiness by works is excluded. The following is quoted from Shinran, Honen's disciple:

'The invocation of the name of Buddha is neither a good work nor indeed any special performance at all on the part of the believer. It cannot be called a personal performance, for it is not a deed arising out of man's own determination and it cannot be called a good work, since it is not completed in him as a result of his own determination. Since here the strength of another power alone is at work without any manifestation of man's own power, there can be no question of good works nor, indeed, of any performance on the part of the believer.'²

2. Man has no longer to share his hope and trust among three places of refuge, Triratna, but all his love and longing for salvation turn to Buddha, the god, to his love, his sacrifice and, first and last, to his promise. This promise appears in countless variations. Number eight of the forty-eight prayers runs:

'I myself will not take unto myself perfect enlightenment so long as a single one of the living beings of the ten quarters who with his whole heart and with the wish to be born in my country believes in me and gives me his devotion, shall not have been born there.'³

Haas quotes the promise in the following form from Koa Shonin, one of the followers of Shinran:

'When I have been brought to attain the Buddhahood, I will not take unto myself the perfect enlightenment, so long as the living beings of all the ten quarters who confidently believe in me and have the wish to be born in my land and who turn their

¹ Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

² *Ibid.*, p. 128.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

devotion to me, though it be but ten times, so long as these are not born there.¹

I make bold also to quote the following form of the vow from Professor M. Anesaki:²

Vows are accomplished, forty-eight in number,
He has attained His aim, the Buddha of Infinite Light;
Assured are we now of birth in His Land,
To us who trust in Him and utter His Name. . . .
Without end is the dreary ocean of births and deaths,
Immersed in it are we since eternity;
We can in no way be carried across (to the other shore),
But by being loaded on the ship of Amita's vow to take all.

By Honen (Genku) himself the vow is rendered in the following form:

'After he had left the palace, his mind having been turned towards the Highest, and when he had given up his high rank as king of his country and embraced the resolution to become a Buddha, Amida, thinking of the establishment of his pure land, composed his forty-eight-fold vow in the eighteenth oath of which he vowed: When I have attained the Buddhahood, I will not take unto myself the perfect enlightenment so long as one living being in all the ten quarters who has the wish to be born in my land and calls upon my name though it be but ten times, walking in the strength of my vow, is not born there.³

This vow is an act of salvation which alone is the cause of the confidence and the deliverance of the pious. To avoid the vicissitudes of time and to impart assurance, the vow is placed before time. Amida has performed this eternal counsel. Therefore he who, believing in the ante-temporal vow, invokes the name of Amida need have no doubt of salvation.

Sin is, to be sure, a hindrance. Whoever puts his trust in the eternal vow must be zealous to correct his faults and be afraid of sin. But even those who have committed grievous sins will be saved by the invocation and by faith in the boundless mercy of Amida.

Honen wrote to a friend:

'As to the sinning, let a man beware lest he commit the slightest

¹ Ibid., p. 48.

² Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, p. 185.

³ Haas, op. cit., p. 39.

trespass and yet let him believe that even he who has committed the ten sins and has been guilty of the five grievous offences shall enter into life. Even those who bear the burden of grievous sins shall be born again, how much more shall they who have sinned but in a slight degree!¹

3. Here we are up against one of the great problems of religion—how to gain assurance.

Inasmuch as religion is not merely psychology and self-saving, but embraces likewise faith in a supernatural world, the assurance thereof is of essential importance to the pious man. How can he be assured of the divinity, and not only of the divinity, but also, which is equally important, of the grace and power of the divinity, of the will of the divinity to help him. He needs to know that the divinity has really saved him from his distress, from sin, and the world. This assurance can be sought, and in a measure attained, through subjective perceptions and experiences reached by some well-tried psychological method, or assurance can be grounded in the conclusions drawn by the reason from the visible world, from things and phenomena which are incontestable. One can ascend on the Jacob's ladder of mysticism, or on the firm road of reason, from the visible to the invisible.

But the soul craves more. On the approach of doubt, when the world and all that happens seem grimly to contradict the assurance of a divine power and a divine mercy, one's own experiences do not suffice. And the conclusions of reason may collapse like a house of cards.

Does the outer world, then, exhibit no proofs of divine justice and love? Faith looks at history and asks whether there is nothing there to hold on to, even when subjective feeling and the conclusions of reason totter and sway.

There are in the history of religion three classical examples of piety seeking support for its assurance in history, in an objective something beyond the range of man, but yet of such a constitution that its content and meaning are unambiguous and bear decisive evidence of the action of divine love for the well-being of mankind. I do not intend here to deal with the various views of the divinity and of history which underlie

¹ Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

the three following classical examples of a religious assurance seeking its support outside man himself in something objective and tangible done by the divinity for the good of man.

a. For Israel the proof of God lay in the deliverance from Egypt. When darkness hid the way and the situation appeared hopeless, the pious directed their gaze to the past history of Israel. There shone the light of God's steadfastness and, notwithstanding present trials, one must believe in God and his help considering what he had done in by-gone times.¹ With this event was joined the memory of God's help in later times.² But the main proof was and remains God's mighty work for the people, when they were delivered from captivity in Egypt and the foundation of their national existence was laid.

b. For Christianity the revelation of God in history is essential. This is concentrated and consummated in the person of Jesus Christ. When all else breaks down, the pious gaze at the Cross which is the everlastingly valid proof of the unsearchable mercy of God.

c. Outside the Biblical religions there are various traces of analogies to this finding of support by religious faith in a historical event (as the Germans say, a *Heilstatsache*, a salvation-fact), but there is, properly, only one great corresponding fact, incalculably precious to millions of people in many lands and centuries. I mean the doctrine of Mahayana on the vow of Buddha. The vow itself is by no means confined to Mahayana Buddhism but occurs, as I have stated above, in the Buddha legend.³ Buddha was tempted to be consistent. But he did not take Nirvana as his prize. He was not consistent. He did not choose the bliss, the extinction, the peace of Nirvana. What passed in his soul, however, is expressed and symbolized by the tale that the supreme God, Brahma Sahampati, left the Brahma-world and besought Buddha with clasped hands to preach the doctrine for the salvation of mankind ere he entered into Nirvana.

Though wellnigh two and a half millenniums separate us from Siddhartha's time, and though the sources of our knowledge of the noble prince's way from home to peace are partly

¹ Pss. xxii, xliv, lxxvii, lxxxix, cvi, cvii, cxiv, &c. ² Ps. cxxvi. ³ Mahavagga, i. 5.

late and have been elaborated, as well as shaped and ordered after a certain type, yet I cannot read this account without feeling through the centuries the stirrings of Siddhartha's soul and, with many millions, blessing him for not accepting the consequences of his doctrine and selfishly enjoying undisturbed peace. Pity drove him to preach salvation to the world. His heart was moved, and he said to Brahma: 'Let the gates of eternity be opened to all. Who hath ears, let him hear the word with faith.'

He was ashamed that he had been afraid of trouble. He granted the prayer of mankind and the gods and resolved to proclaim the four holy truths.

This beautiful moment of Buddha's life became in Mahayana a salvation-fact, a *Heilstatsache*. It is not enough to give men psychological advice how to get to Nirvana. They are referred to the vow of Buddha not to enter into Nirvana before the saving truth had been proclaimed to all creatures. All that man needs for his salvation is to hold fast by faith to this vow of Buddha's. Salvation is not gained by one's own exertions or by exercises of piety, but by abandoning all and relying on what Buddha, in his infinite mercy, once performed for the salvation of mankind.

No wonder that the Jesuit missionaries in Japan complained that the Lutheran heresy was widespread there.

4. Self-salvation in Yoga, Jinism, Hinayana, and kindred doctrines in the West, refers man entirely to himself. But can he depend upon himself? On his feelings, on the firmness of his mind, on his power to resist the outward and inward contradictions of life?

Amida religion has felt this problem too. Man can and must be assured of his salvation at any cost. No one has more earnestly upheld the right to confidence and the peace of the believer, in the face of anguish, doubt and distress, than Luther. We find in many mystics the same problem and the same striving after assurance against the hindrances raised by the heart and by the course of events and 'the dark night'. But none more clearly than Luther has pointed himself and others to an objective historical fact, outside man and independent of his mind and feeling.

There is a certain analogy in the Bhakti which is directed towards the vow of Amitabha. No one may disturb the security of the believer. Kōa Shonin, the great disciple of Shinran, writes:

'Such faint-hearted despondency is a hindrance on the path to life. It need not trouble us in the least that the desire of our heart is so feeble. By the nothingnesses which, as thou sayest, possess thine inner man, I suppose thou meanest evil thoughts, covetousness and hate. But these belong to the common afflictions of humanity, so one need not be diverted from one's purpose by them. Suppose one allowed all to be as it is without bestowing upon it any thought: Whether one makes progress on the path to life, or whether one suffers a repulse, according as the evil thoughts within us are few or many, that is another matter. It is, however, by the power of the *ante-temporal* vow alone that man shall enter into life, why shouldst thou be anxious whether thou thyself art capable?'¹

Shinran himself wrote:

'This question has also presented itself to me so that we two, I, Shinran, and thou, Yuiembo, are in the same situation as regards our inner man. But if we ponder the matter thoroughly, we must arrive at the same conclusion, viz. that we have not attained to such a feeling of joy, though we had every reason to exult and to dance for joy like madmen, and this should warrant us in believing that the entrance into life has been secured to us. The reason why our heart, which properly is bound to rejoice, is so depressed that it cannot attain to a perception of real joy is that fleshly lusts are at work in us. Buddha was, however, already conscious of this, for he spoke to us as poor wretched creatures who have fallen into error by reason of our lusts. So we know and can have the more confidence that the gracious vow which promises to us the succour of another power has been intended for such as we.'²

But to him who has attained firm confidence in the mercy of God, there is little significance in gods, spirits, and devils, or in sin and punishment. What the ascetic won by his exercises, the pious man wins by his trust in Amida. Shinran writes:

'To a pious man standing firm in faith, the very gods of the

¹ Haas, op. cit., p. 91.

² Ibid., pp. 127-8.

heaven and the spirits on earth will bow in reverence, nor will Mara and his servants nor the demons be able to put any kind of obstacle in his way. Neither sins and evil nor requiting punishment can ever disturb him and no other good work comes up to his. Therefore he is on a way where nothing can hinder him.¹

5. A new difficulty now presents itself to the mind and to the religious needs. When the soul, in the moment of doubt and distress, perceives the downfall of all those props of faith provided by its own experience and feeling, or erected and held fast by its reason, it finds deliverance in fleeing from itself, from its own experiences, from the bewildering and offensive way of the world, to something which has happened in the clear light of history, which cannot be juggled away and which bears manifest witness to divine mercy. The soul flees from its own work and itself to God's work in history.

But how can we be sure of what has happened in history? Criticism raises its head. Opinions differ. The trustworthiness of the sources is questioned. Some one appears, perhaps, who denies that the salvation-fact on which man bases his faith has ever happened in very deed. What has occurred in history can never be proved. It can never be made logically and mathematically certain. It appertains to the world of phenomena. Is it not absurd to base the eternal welfare of the soul on something which, like all facts, runs the risk of being denied or explained away? The scientific conscience demands full freedom for research. But religious longing needs assurance. It has the nostalgia for the Unconditioned, *das Heimweh nach dem Unbedingten*. Shall we make faith dependent on something which is the object of scientific discussion or, at any rate, can become the object of historical criticism?

Man is here facing a new dilemma. No wonder that some have wished to transfer the salvation-fact which is to be the ground of the religious assurance of man, away from history to a timeless existence inaccessible to textual-criticism and the investigation of sources. This has happened in Christianity. The main significance has been attached, not to the Gospel story of the preaching of Jesus Christ, his words and works,

¹ Haas, op. cit., p. 127.

and the Cross on Golgotha, but to the eternal, timeless Logos. It has been said: *finilum non est capax infiniti*. The Gospel story has been regarded as at best a parable and a symbol of divine resolves and actions which belong to the spiritual world and are not affected by the events of history and the changes of time. However psychologically explicable this endeavour of the Christian mind may be, the history of the Church proves that Christian faith and love derive their vital strength from the sacred story and that all attempts to free Christian assurance from dependence on what happened in Palestine and on Golgotha must, in the long run, imply spiritual enfeeblement.

The same problem has been felt in Buddhism. What the historical Siddhartha of the Sakya family did for men's salvation has not seemed to be convincing enough for the poor soul seeking certitude, therefore religious thought has turned to the eternal Amitabha (Amida), Infinite Light, or Amitayus, Infinite Life, who is worshipped as God. It is improbable that this doctrine of salvation through Bhakti can be derived from Christian influence. We have to do here with an autochthonous, home-grown, genuinely Hindu and Buddhist creation. On a close analysis of the two *Heilstat-sachen*, saving historical facts, which are here brought together, viz. the Life and Cross of Christ and the Vow or rather the Vows of Buddha, we find how essentially different is the background against which these salvation-facts are revealed. The conditions display some of the most characteristic differences in the history of religion. But I have shown agreements which are deeply grounded in the very need of religious assurance of divine grace and of God's will and work for the salvation of mankind.

To lift the vow of Siddhartha—by which he overcame the particular legendary temptation connected with his vocation, but which really formed a consequence of his doctrine—out of history to an assurance independent of the world of phenomena and the risk of historical doubt, the vow is freed from the historical existence of Siddhartha on Indian soil and transformed into an act occurring prior to time and history. Its assurance is thus raised above earthly existence.

Here is the same tendency as that displayed in many shapes in Christian theology, viz. to raise and, in some manner, loosen the saving fact, the promise of salvation, from history. And I suppose that Mahayana Buddhism has had something of the same experience as Christianity, viz. that contact with the historic Buddha, his preaching and his person, is a life-giving element and a source of power which cannot be lightly abandoned.

I cannot here deal with the differing principle involved in the position held by Christ's person in Christendom and that of Buddha's person in Buddhism. Christ gave himself as the perfect revelation of the Father and was worshipped by the earliest Church as such. Buddha's mission was to proclaim the doctrine of the holy truths. This is not the place to develop more fully what is implied by this distinction. I thought it would be of interest, however, to point out how man's search for salvation and truth in widely differing surroundings and traditions, times and temperaments, displays the same flight from the merely subjective or intellectual to the concrete world of history. Here arises, moreover, the unavoidable paradox, that what has occurred in history can never be brought to logical certainty. The religious search for assurance desires to remove the divine work of salvation from history, and has done so, but yet cannot without loss of religious power remove the ground of assurance from history.

6. In Japan, more than any other country, Mahayana has revealed in the figure of Jodo-shu its *democratic* character.

This religion is altogether democratic. Women, too, have a part in salvation. In the depth of his compassion for women, Amida even took another oath because they were so deeply sunk in sin, in order to guarantee to them the assurance of salvation. Amida said long ago: 'I alone will save woman'. Ever since, a woman can attain to the Buddhahood. Shinran, by his marriage, brought about a revolution. The monastic ideal of piety was broken. The priests of the Shin sect are allowed to marry, as well as to eat fish and flesh, things forbidden to other monks.

• As Hans Haas remarks, the Shin sect has known how to

still the spiritual hunger of the Japanese people. He estimates the number of its adherents at twenty millions. This branch or church of Buddhism carries on instruction, preaching, scientific work, and works of charity.

7. But the believer does not reach his goal on earth. He yearns for the perfection of heaven, for Jodo, the land of Purity. Nagarjuna, Mahayana's great religious Father in India and the greatest teacher of Buddhism after the founder, said as early as the end of the second century after Christ: 'Faith is the means of access to the great ocean which is the law of Buddha.'¹

The aim of original Buddhism was flight from rebirth to Nirvana, to unbroken rest in which every vital movement is brought to a standstill. In Mahayana, however, the hope of celestial bliss is frequently expressed. Sukhavati is 'the land of bliss' where Amitabha, 'the eternal light' adored by all beings, is enthroned and for which all the pious yearn. The glory of heaven is described in extravagant terms, a luxuriant oriental heaven with golden groves, gigantic lotus-flowers, broad streams, an infinitude of treasures and jewels, music and other amenities, a marvellous Bodhi-tree, the tree of redeeming knowledge, freedom from sin and pain, and, best of all, deliverance from rebirth. Thither do the pious hope to come by the mercy of the celestial Buddha-god, Amitabha. Scenes from the Sukhavati heaven are often pictorially represented.

And lastly the object of faith and invocation is to be born in the pure land of Amida. Honen wrote: 'Among all the ways of escape from the Samsara coercion of life and death, no better path leads to this respite than being born again in the western land of purity. Among all the works whereby one may attain to such a birth in the pure land, none is better than invocation of the Buddha Amida.' Even now the pious man should be merciful to others, should pity them and protect them. That is the mercy of 'the sacred path'. But it is of little or no avail. Only when he has been born again in the pure land and has become a Buddha can he show real compassion to others, like Amida. That is the mercy of 'the land of purity'.

¹ Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

Here we are far from the omnipotence of exercises. But Yoga has for millenniums retained its significance in India. It is true that asceticism in India, as nowhere else, perhaps, has excelled in inhuman and abominable forms and paid inconceivable homage to dirt and unnatural practices. At the same time, however, Yoga is an honour to India. Self-restraint, the deliverance of the mind from disturbing impressions, from the enticements of the senses and distracting thoughts and its concentration upon the one thing needful, pure spirituality, has been insisted on by Bhaktas as well as by Bauddhas, Jainas, and the great men of the Upanishads, a Yajnavalkya, the preacher of the mysticism of Brahman Atman, and a Kapila, the author of the scientific view of the universe. It is true that asceticism in India believed that man might save himself when no divinity was available. But when God has revealed himself in his power and love to seekers of salvation, Yoga, ascetic exercises are more than ever necessary in order to keep the soul free from the world while the duties of life are being performed.

VI

RELIGION AS FIGHT AGAINST EVIL. ZARATHUSHTRA

I AM afraid that the object of this lecture, the prophet of ancient Iran, is more prosaic and less interesting from a general point of view, but he has a great significance for the history of religion as being the nearest or even the only real counterpart of the Old Testament prophets and their less original successor Mohammed.

Being about to speak of Zarathushtra at a British university, my mind turns to one of the best friends of the Iranian prophet in our time in Great Britain. And a double sense of gratitude possessed me when I made a fresh study of James Hope Moulton's Hibbert Lectures on Early Zoroastrianism. This was his last important scientific work and was published in 1913. It was a study of his on the ancient Persian religion in *The Thinker* which led me to devote a considerable part of my research work to the religion of Avesta. That was well-nigh forty years ago. Intervening obstacles, right up to the present time, have compelled me to postpone the fulfilment of my promise, to discuss publicly his delightful book on Zarathushtra of 1913. This noble-minded man and eminent research-worker in the fields of religion and philology became a victim of the world tragedy in the waters of the Mediterranean.

I

Within the circle of phenomena which have possessed great and vital importance for the intercourse of our human race with the Divinity, there are scarcely any other religious documents in the world's literature so enigmatical with regard to origin, date, locality, and interpretation as the Gatha literature in the Avesta.

The prophet Zarathushtra appears there as the speaker. His God, Ahura Mazdah, is accompanied by a set of angels or heavenly beings and protectors, called Good Thought, Best Order, Beneficent Piety, Desirable Dominion (Rule,

Kingdom), Immortality, Well-being. They are half abstractions or religious conceptions, half concrete divine Beings, representing or commanding each one a part of the world. These hymns, *Gathas*, seem so full of theory and learning that James Darmesteter, the great interpreter of the Avesta, resorted to the wild hypothesis that the *Gathas* are of late origin and reproduce Hellenistic conceptions.

But the circumstances and situation in this literature are very concrete and living. We learn of the division of the country into estates (villages), districts (parishes), and provinces.¹ The Liar brings misery upon house and village, district and land.² The people are divided into nobles, farmers—or rather cattle-tenders, for we shall find, though it has hitherto escaped observation, that the *Gathas* were unacquainted with agriculture—and priests, *Xvaētu*, *verezena*, *airyaman*.³ The third word, *airyaman*, usually signifies servant. Ferdinand Justi supposed that the placing of this class last of all is a piece of humility, nowhere else exhibited by the priesthood. With Moulton I doubt whether the word ought to be translated by priest or servant. Moulton renders it by *brotherhood*,⁴ in close agreement with Christian Bartholomae's interpretation *Sodalen*. The middle word also, *verezena*, can be rendered better by congregation, common folk. We are thus concerned with the chiefs, the common folk, and the brotherhood, the intimate friends who followed the prophet.

Excellent information is given respecting the prophet's family and kinsfolk.⁵ Frashaoshtra, who belonged to a friendly family, the Hvogvas, gave to the prophet in marriage his daughter, the amiable young woman who is the object of the prophet's good wishes.⁶ The rich and mighty Jamaspa belonged to the same family.⁷ The last brief *Gatha* chapter is a song in which Zarathushtra gives his daughter Pourucista in marriage to this Jamaspa.⁸ In the good wishes of Zarathushtra and in the family idyll there also figure the chief Vishtaspa and Zarathushtra's own son, whose name,

¹ Yasna 31. 16; Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, pp. 341 sqq. ² Yasna 31. 18.

³ Yasna 33. 3. ⁴ Yasna 32. 1; 33. 3. Moulton, op. cit., p. 355.

⁵ Yasna 46. 15-17. ⁶ Yasna 51. 17. ⁷ Yasna 51. 18. ⁸ Yasna 53.

Yshatvastra, is familiar from later texts. It was Zarathushtra's youngest daughter who was married to Jamaspa. The hymn is best explained by putting the fourth stanza into the mouth of Jamaspa.¹ 'Earnestly will I lead her to the faith,'² or, according to Maria Wilkins Smith's translation: 'her with fervour will I love,'³ 'that she may serve her father and her husband, the farmers and the nobles, as a righteous woman (serving) the righteous. The glorious heritage of Good Thought shall Mazdah Ahura give to her good Self for all time'.⁴ However, not even in this little Gatha, which consists of only nine stanzas, and from its initial words bears the name of 'The best possession' can the prophet confine himself to the wedding and the concerns of the family. In the nuptial hymn the prophet exhorts marriageable maidens and, as far as we can see, the young men also, beseeching them to strive after the life of the 'Good Thought'. 'Let each of you strive to excel the other in the Right, for it will be a prize for that one.' But in the four remaining stanzas of the nine the prophet renews his constant discourse, calling down woe and curses upon the ungodly, who are branded as the followers of *Drug*, the Lie. 'So it is in fact, ye men and women! Whatever happiness ye look for in union with the Lie shall be taken away from your persons. To them, the Liars, shall be evil food, crying woe! —bliss shall flee from them that despise righteousness. In such wise do ye destroy for yourselves the spiritual Life.' He who keeps the covenant with the zeal of faith obtains a reward, while the followers of the spirit of Lie are doomed to perish. 'Separate ye from the Covenant, so shall your word at the last be Woe!' 'As for those whose deeds are evil, let them be deceived, and let them all howl, abandoned to ruin. By the aid of good rulers let him bring death and bloodshed upon them, and peace from their assaults unto the happy villagers. Grief let him bring on those, he that is Greatest, with the bonds of death; and soon let it be! To men of evil creed belongs the place of corruption, who set themselves to condemn the worthy, despising righteousness,

¹ Yasna 53. 4.

³ Wilkins Smith, *Studies*, p. 158.

² Moulton, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

⁴ Moulton.

casting away their own body. Where is the Righteous Lord'—Ahura, Zarathushtra's usual divine name, is employed here evidently of his mighty helper, Vishtaspa—'who shall rob them of life and freedom? Thine, Mazda, is the Dominion, whereby thou canst give to the right-living poor man the better portion.'¹

In this outpouring which occupies the latter part of the hymn on the daughter's marriage, we get a notion of Zarathushtra's enthusiasm and its object.

In the preceding Gatha also² the prophet's friends are named: the chief Vishtaspa of the house Kavi, the prophet's father-in-law Frashaoshtra and his son-in-law Jamaspa. There is also introduced another friend and helper, Maidyoi-maongha. Like Zarathushtra he belonged to the Spitama family, and according to later tradition he was the first to be won by the prophet for his doctrine.³

Stanza 12 of the same Gatha is remarkable. In the concentrated form of the elaborate metre it hints at a carefully localized episode: 'The Kavi's man-servant did not please Zarathushtra Spitama at the Winter Gate, because he prevented him from taking refuge there, as well as his (Zarathushtra's) two horses shivering with cold.'⁴ It was a breach of the law of hospitality. The prophet did not forget it. Bartholomae asks if this odious chief is the same Bendva who is severely blamed in Yasna 49: 'Ever has Bendva opposed me, my greatest (foe), because I desire to win through Right men that are neglected, O Mazda. . . . The perverter of this Bendva has long time impeded me, the Liar who has fallen away from Right' (Asha),⁵ Bartholomae supposes that by 'perverter' is here meant the same Grehma who is mentioned in Yasna 32. This Grehma and 'his tribe are preferred to the Right', Asha, by those 'who destroy the life of the Ox with shouts of Joy'—a reference to the sacrifices and orgies which Zarathushtra condemned. But 'Grehma will come to the realms in the dwelling of the Worst Thought' and he shall lament in his longing for the message of the prophet, his longing being too late. Grehma and the Kavis seek to

¹ Yasna 53. 5-9.

³ Yasna 51. 16-19.

⁴ Yasna 51. 12.

² Yasna 51-2.

⁵ Yasna 49. 1-2.

suppress the prophet with all their power, 'for they set themselves to help the liar, and that it may be said "The Ox shall be slain"'.¹

As we hear, the Kavis, the chiefs, the warriors or the nobles are reckoned among the followers of Drug, the Lie; they worship Daevas, the evil spirits. The chief Vishtaspa is a splendid exception. He took an interest in the prophet and became his faithful supporter, being moved by his zeal and necessity. Karapan seems to be the term for the priesthood against which Zarathushtra fought. The name is connected by Moulton with the Sanskrit word *kalpa*, ritc.² Perhaps the term Usij, which in 44. 20 is co-ordinated with Karapan, has the same significance. 'There we are told that 'the Karapan and the Usij gave up the cattle to violence' and that 'the Kavi made them continually to mourn instead of taking care that they should make the pastures prosper through Right', Asha.³

Among the opponents of the prophet is mentioned the Turanian Fryana.⁴ But, O miracle, among his 'laudable descendants and posterity' there shall arise such as favour the works of piety, which here coincides with peaceful work, care of the pasture and cattle-breeding.

It is manifest that we are here moving within a limited sphere. Not in every case can it be ascertained what and whom the prophet means. But Bartholomae is surely right in saying that we are not here confronted with generalities, but that expressions of anger as well as blessings in the mouth of Zarathushtra relate to definite persons. Zarathushtra lived in a corner of the world. It is the quality of his message and life's work and not their quantity which has made him a figure in the history of the world. The same rule holds good of the greatest in religion.

The figure of the chief Vishtaspa, who rendered assistance to Zarathushtra and his work in the prophet's distress, meets us in the concrete situation in which we are placed by the Gathas notwithstanding their character of artistic poetry and notwithstanding the indefinable conceptions and beings

¹ Yasna 32. 12-14.

³ Yasna 44. 20.

² Moulton, op. cit., p. 140.

⁴ Yasna 46. 12.

surrounding Ahura Mazdah. The name Vishtaspa is the same as Hystaspes. But for chronological reasons alone it is impossible to identify Zarathushtra's Vishtaspa with the father of King Darius. Zarathushtra must be put a good deal farther back in time. It is not impossible, however, as A. V. W. Jackson and others have sought to show in detail, that the chief or princeling, who was the friend of Zarathushtra, belonged to the same family of which a branch later gave Darius to the dominion of the Achaemenians. He meets us as early as the first Gatha chapter.¹ Kavi signifies knight, nobleman or warrior, member of the higher temporal classes. Later on Kavi is the name of a dynasty or family. Possibly its original reference was to an extensive clan. They clung to the worship and manner of living which the priest and prophet Zarathushtra opposed with all his power. Kavis, the nobles, appear in the Gathas as the hated opponents of the prophet, while he compassionates the condition of the lower temporal classes, the cattle-tenders and the pasture-wardens, and protects them. Thus a social contrast is evidently reflected in the Gathas. Zarathushtra took the part of the oppressed. He could not suffer the haughtiness and tyrannical caprice with which the nobles or warriors preyed upon what the hard-working countryman had built up and maintained by his toil. He desired to obtain peace and security for this primitive farming with its pasture and cattle and its settled population. However, as so often happens in social reforms, Zarathushtra could only carry out his plans by the aid of members of that upper class, whose habits and conditions of life he was opposing. The Kavis are his hereditary enemies, as they are the enemies of the farmers. They live without useful employment on the products of the farmer's steady labour. It is therefore so much the more remarkable that Zarathushtra was able to gain support in that very class of noblemen. Vishtaspa is also a Kavi,² but in contrast to his fellow-nobles a good Kavi; according to the Lord's own words, Zarathushtra's friend 'in the great covenant' (Bartholomae) or maybe (according to Geldner and Carnoy) 'in the reception of the great gift of grace', the

¹ Yasna 28. 7.

² Yasna 46. 11.

treasure in heaven.¹ The prophet prays for eternal good for Vishtaspa and for himself.² At the great 'consummation' this Kavi, the noble, the prince, shall be received by Ahura in his celestial dwelling, called by the prophet 'Good Thought'.³ Among the nobles who formed splendid exceptions in their class were Jamaspa and Frashaoshtra, by marriage allied to the prophet, who thus likewise belonged to the higher classes. Kavi Vishtaspa accepted the creed which the Beneficent, All-wise Ahura devised with Right (Asha).⁴

A vivid impression of the prophet's troubles is afforded in the first four stanzas of the Hymn of Misfortune,⁵ *Kam nemoi zam*: 'To what land shall I flee?'

To what land shall I flee, whither shall I flee?
From the nobility and from the priest-caste (the sodality)
They exclude me.
Not satisfies me the community,
Nor the Drug-minded rulers of the land.
How shall I satisfy Thee, Mazdah Ahura?

In the next stanza we learn the reason of the prophet's despondency and despair.

I know the reason why I am without success.
Few cattle are mine, and I have but few followers.
I cry unto Thee: Look to it, O Ahura,
Granting me support as friend gives to friend.
Teach me through Asha (Right, Order) the acquisition of
Good Thought.

By this is meant the reward, upon which the pious can reckon through Vohu Manah.

In Stanza 3 the question is asked when, like a rising sun, the right teaching shall gain the victory through the future deliverers, Saoshyants. And in stanza 4 our presumption that the prophet's complaint has a personal cause is confirmed. We do not know the names. But the reference is certainly

¹ Yasna 46. 14; Moulton, op. cit., pp. 349, 375, 387.

² Yasna 28. 7.

³ Yasna 46. 14.

⁴ Yasna 51. 16.

⁵ Yasna 46.

to some definite opponent over whom the prophet cannot prevail.

The man of Lie (the Drug-companion) prevents the furtherers of Right

From prospering the cattle in district and province,

Infamous as he is, repellent because of his deeds.

Whoso, Mazdah, robs him of dominion (Khshathra) or of life,

He shall go before and prepare the paths of good doctrine.

The answer to the prayer is named at the end of the same Hymn of Misfortune.¹ And the name of the answer was Vishtaspa.

O, Zarathushtra, what righteous man is thy friend for the great covenant? Who desires good fame?

It is the Kavi Vishtaspa at the fulfilment.

The connexions are discernible, but we cannot see them clearly. Zarathushtra emerges from the gloom, suddenly, and he is brightly illuminated by the witness which he himself or his closest followers have given in the old hymns still extant. It is a strong, nervous form of worship we become acquainted with there. Its fundamental character is continued in the Avesta even after it has become an agricultural religion, properly so called, and the official religion of an empire. It continues in its desire to serve God by tilling and planting, by extending civilization while struggling against a hard climate, drought, and warlike predatory neighbours, central Asiatic hordes of the type which time and again have harassed the civilized nations.

II

There can be no question as to what it was that brought forward Zarathushtra and drove him to his prophetic work. He makes his appearance with passionate strength and stern enthusiasm. The cause is constantly alluded to in the Gatha stanzas. A summarized explanation is given in Yasna 29, the hymn containing the lament of the cattle. The soul of the cattle wails aloud. It turns to the celestial beings.

‘Unto you wailed the soul of the cattle. For whom did ye fashion

¹ Yasna 46. 14.

me? Who created me? Outrage and might, violence and rapine oppress me. I have no other herdsman than you: prepare for me the blessings of pasture.¹

Elsewhere in the Gathas we are told more about the ill-treatment of the cattle. Proud and capricious barons, perhaps also nomads and hunter tribes, molested the peaceful herdsmen. They had no understanding of the importance of caring for the valuable grazing-grounds set apart for the regular rearing of cattle. The cattle which were the most important property of the herdsmen were slaughtered and eaten. Such slaughter most likely formed a part of the worship opposed by the prophet as well as the orgies connected with it. In the second stanza the divinity appears under the name of Creator of the Cattle, *Geush Tasha*, an otherwise unknown name of honour for the 'Lord', Ahura, of Zarathushtra. What the cattle and their management meant for Zarathushtra, as well as his piety and his prophetic vocation, cannot be better illustrated than by the fact that the divinity is here called 'Creator of Cattle'. The latter questions *Asha*. The word *Asha* is the same as the *Rta* of the Veda religion and should, perhaps, be *Arta* in the Gatha songs and the Avesta. It is found in the Latin word *ritus* and signifies what is right, the right order. Elsewhere in the Gathas, though not in this place, Right, Piety, *Asha*, bears the additional name 'the best', *Vahishta*, *Asha Vahishta*, which, later on, after the Gatha period, becomes the proper name of this genius or angel. The Creator of the Cattle inquires whether *Asha* has a *Ratu* for the cattle, a judge or defender who can procure for the cattle the needful attention as well as pasture. The *Ratu* demanded is called immediately afterwards in the same stanza Ahura, the same word as the divine name, 'Lord'. 'Whom do ye will to be his lord, who may drive off violence together with the followers of the Lie?'

In the third stanza the Right, *Asha*, answers that there is no helper for the cattle who is free from harassing enmity. Men do not know how honest men should treat the humble and weak. But yet the strongest of beings is he, to whose

¹ Yasna 29. 1.

help Asha promises to come at call. With such words Zarathushtra and his hymns of prayer are introduced into the lamenting hymn of the Ox-soul.

Mazdah, the All-wise, remembers the purposes that have been wrought by devils (*Daevas*) and men and will be wrought hereafter. He, the Lord, Ahura, is the one who decides. 'So shall it be as he shall will.'

Now, in the fifth stanza, the soul of the ox and the soul of the pregnant cow cry with outstretched hands to the Lord, Ahura, beseeching the All-wise, Mazdah, with their prayers. 'Let not destruction come to the right-living, nor to the cattle-tender, at the hands of the Liars.' Opponents are denominated here, as elsewhere, *Dregvant*, adherents of Drug, the Lie. This name is employed for the Evil One also in the inscription of King Darius at Behishtun. The honest and right-doing men desired by the soul of the cattle for whom Zarathushtra is now to be Ratu, principal, and Ahura, Lord, are named here by one of the two standing appellations which indicate their business and reveal to us the peculiar geographically conditioned modes of sustenance under which the prophet's friends lived. They are called here *fshuyant* from the verb *fshav*, to fatten, to nourish, to rear, to feed, particularly in the sense of breeding and managing cattle, cattle-tenders.

In the next stanza, 6, Ahura Mazdah himself, the Lord, the All-wise, speaks and answers the soul of the cattle that, properly, according to the Order, the Right, Asha, neither *ahu*, lord, governor, teacher, nor *ratu*, defender, headman, judge, exists for the soul of the cattle, but the Creator has fashioned the cattle for the cattle-tender and the keeper of the pasture. Ahu and Ratu signify in the Gathas the chief and the judge. Thus, according to the purpose of the Creator and the right order, Asha, the one for whom the cattle exist is no other than this despised cattle-owner and cattle-tender who is constantly menaced and plagued by the nobles of the upper class and, no doubt, also by the hunter tribes and the nomads. They are here denoted by their second name, *Vastrya*, he who is concerned with *vastra*, pasture, grass, fodder. In the first stanza of the Lament of the Ox-soul

which we are now analysing, the soul of the cattle appeals to the celestial powers and says: 'I have no other herdsman (Vastar) than you.' Farmer, agriculturist, are not the proper words to use when we have to render as exactly as possible the natural conditions under which Zarathushtra lived, as well as the economic life and form of polity into which he brought the zeal of his strong soul. The Gatha texts, otherwise so full of the passionate care of the prophet for the cattle and their owners and for the soil, know nothing of ploughing and sowing, corn and threshing and baking. Vastrya signifies here the one who cares for the pastures, keeps them unmolested, perchance manuring, protecting, and cleansing them. In the two words, cattle-tenders and pasture-keepers, we see before us the people who were the objects of Zarathushtra's solicitude. Nowhere can we find warmer and stronger enthusiasm for the civilizing work of the farmer than in the Avesta. But we, like the later Avesta, connect with the words farmer and agriculture the words ploughing and sowing and harvest which, according to the Gatha literature, do not occur at the time of Zarathushtra. The cattle are thus created for the cattle-tenders and the pasture-keepers.

In the next stanza, 7, it is said that Ahura created the word, the holy word, or the ordinance, *manthra*, about *azutay*, fat, nourishment, especially solid nourishment, fodder, as distinct from liquid nourishment, milk, for the cattle, and 'milk for them that crave nourishment', that is, human beings. Here is established the just division demanded by the Order, Asha, between men who owe to the cattle care and pasture, and the cattle who in return owe to men their milk.

In the third and last line of the seventh stanza the soul of the cattle speaks once more: 'Whom hast thou, O Good Thought'—Vohu Manah, one of Ahura's archangels with whom the cattle are afterwards connected, Good Thought, Good Mind, Good Meaning, Purpose—'who shall care for us both (the soul of the ox and the soul of the cow) to the benefit of men (mankind)?' It seems to me possible to let these final words also, like stanza 6 and the first part of stanza 7, be spoken by the Lord, Ahura, who then asks Vohu Manah, the angel Good Thought, whom he has that can

look after the cattle on behalf of mankind ('for those both' instead of 'for us both').

In stanza 8, Good Thought answers and states what is the real meaning of the hymn. (Ahura can, however, be regarded as the speaker also.) "This man here has been found for me who, alone has hearkened to our doctrines, Zarathushtra Spitama.¹ He is willing to proclaim our desires, O Mazdah (the All-wise) and those of the Order (Right, Piety, Asha). So let us bestow on him sweetness of speech."

Here the prophet is introduced by name. In the first Gatha chapter (Yasna 28. 6) Zarathushtra is mentioned for the first time in this ancient literature. He is there commended to the powerful support of the All-wise. The whole of the first Gatha chapter may be regarded as the prophet's invocation and desire. Here in the Lament of the Ox-soul (Yasna 29), the second Gatha chapter, God agrees with the celestial beings to grant to the Spitama scion Zarathushtra at any rate the gift of speech, since he cannot become a Ahu, chief, lord, and Ratu, judge, defender, with outward power and authority.

The Ox-soul is not content. By its continued complaint in stanza 9 we perceive the prophet's own sorrow at his weakness and incapacity for the superhuman task.

"Then the soul of the herd lamented: that I must be content with a powerless protector (with) a voice of a weak man, when I indeed wish for one that commands mightily. When shall there ever be one who shall give him (the ox-soul or perhaps Zarathushtra) active aid?"

The Ox-soul resigns itself and continues in stanza 10. L. H. Mills and other interpreters here introduce Zarathushtra himself as the speaker. With James Darmesteter I consider it more appropriate not to let him commence speaking until the last, the eleventh stanza. In the tenth stanza we read:

"Do ye, O Ahura, grant them strength, O Order, and that Rule, O Good Thought, whereby he (the protector) can produce good dwellings and peace. I also have realized thee, Mazdah, as chief provider of this."

¹ Wilkins Smith, op. cit., p. 68.

Now for the first time Zarathushtra himself comes forward as the speaker in this poem of his prophetic vocation, 'where (else) are Order and Good Thought and Dominion?' Khshathra, Dominion, is one of the celestial powers or genii or angels in the Gathas, afterwards the spiritual chief of the metals.

'So receive me, a mortal'—I read *mashem* instead of *masha*, accusative singular instead of vocative plural—'O Mazdah, for instruction for the great covenant.'

'O Ahura, now is help ours. We will be ready to serve such as you are.' The last line is sometimes by later interpreters separated from the prophet's speech and placed in the mouth of the souls of the ox and the pregnant cow (Bartholomac, Moulton), or of the people who witness the lament of the cattle (Maria Wilkins Smith).

What need have we of more evidence? It is the cattle, their hard fate, and their high value, which have stirred up the prophet. He asks in another hymn, the catechism of the Gatha literature:¹ 'For whom hast thou created the pregnant luck-bringing cow?' The reward desired by the priest is stated as 'ten mares with a stallion and a camel'.² But otherwise, neat cattle, the ox and the cow, are what are really worth striving for. Valuable as cattle are, the value is yet more enhanced when the cow is expecting a calf. The honour of the pregnant cow is sung.

'He, who accomplisheth for me, even Zarathushtra, in accordance with Right, that which best agrees with my will, to him as earning the reward of the other Life shall be that of two pregnant cows, with all things whercon his mind is set.'³

'How, O Mazdah, is he to secure the luck-bringing cow, he who desires it with pasturage?''⁴

The adherents of the devils, those who worship and belong to the Daevas, the evil spirits, have never been good rulers, for they give up the cattle to violence. And Kavis, the princes, cause the cattle to lament instead of looking after them and, caring well for the pasture in accordance with Order, Right, the pious Duty, Asha. 'Let good rulers, not evil rulers, rule over us.' The prayer rises for the welfare of

¹ Yasna 44. 6.

² Yasna 44. 18.

³ Yasna 46. 19.

⁴ Yasna 50. 2.

the cattle: 'for the cow skilled husbandry,' just as for man the coming good, the future birth.¹

This stanza is noteworthy because, after the petition for man's future bliss and for the welfare of the cattle, there is added: 'fatten her for our food' which seems to imply that the cattle are the friends of man not only on account of the milk which they give but also because of their flesh. It would thus appear to be not slaughter as such that was denounced by the prophet, but a spoliation which killed domestic animals, unheeding the requirements of rural husbandry, and probably also bloody sacrifices which, according to the testimony of the Gathas, had not of old pertained to the worship of Zarathushtra, though they occur in the later Avesta and among the Achæmenians and have in all times existed and been practised in certain parts and among certain tribes of Iran. Bloody sacrifices formed a part of the Mithra cult which on the evidence of the Gathas were banned by Zarathushtra, and they accompanied that cult into the Roman Empire.

According to 43. 9 a sacrificial gift was devoted to Fire.² But there we have no right to suppose flesh to be meant; this would not accord with the tradition of the Mazdah religion. The prophet is more likely to be referring to the wood to be laid on the Fire, Atar—according to the later Avesta, a meritorious action. For the later Mazdah religion, as for the Parsees to this very day, the cow is forbidden food, though neat-cattle are highly esteemed as domestic animals. Did Zarathushtra eat neat-flesh, as Bartholomæ and others imagine, finding support for their view in Yasna 29. 7 and 48. 5, according to the translation: 'Let the cattle grow fat for our nourishment'?³ We want to know what the prophet means by the sacrifice which is offered with due service to Ahurā and Asha.⁴ It agrees best with the whole tenor of the Gatha belief to rule cattle out of the sacrifice of Zarathushtra.

In the fifth chapter of the first Gatha⁵ the Daeva worshippers and their evil thoughts, words, and deeds are branded. Among the law-breakers is mentioned Yima, the Yama of the Indian mythology and tale, the son of Vivahvant. What was

¹ Yasna 48. 5. ² Yasna 43. 9. ³ Yasna 48. 5. ⁴ Yasna 34. 3. ⁵ Yasna 32.

his crime? This mighty ruler of antiquity gave flesh, flesh of the ox, to men to eat. In 32. 10 it is reckoned among the crimes of the adversary, the heretic, that he speaks of the cattle and of the sun as the worst things to behold with the eyes. Bartholomae sees in this an allusion to nocturnal sacrifices and their cult. The same false teacher who makes the wise into liars also desolates the pastures. In 32. 12 we learn more of Grehma and his accomplices: 'them who destroy the life of the Ox with shouts of joy.' Maybe, it is not too daring to see here the noisy orgies which were carried on at night amid feasting on the sacrificial flesh. Grehma and the others will therefore come to the dwellings of the Worst Thought, 'where they shall lament in their longing for the message of thy prophet when it is too late'.¹

Possibly the next stanza reveals to us the secret of these nocturnal feasts of sacrifice.² The suppression of Zarathushtra has long been the desire and the endeavour of Grehma and the Kavis in striving to help the man of the Lie so that it may be said: 'let the ox be slain which shall kindle the death-avorter to aid us.' Who is this averter of death? The word *duraosha* in the later Avesta is the standing epithet of *Haoma*, the holy intoxicant which in the later Avesta and ever since has been and is the central point of the chief rite of worship of the Mazdah religion or Parsecism, corresponding to the Soma of the Veda religion. The sacredness of this intoxicant and its place in divine worship must consequently go back to Indo-Iranian times before the tribes and languages were differentiated and settled permanently in India and Iran.

The chief Haoma herb grew according to the Avesta on Mount Elburz. It was 'beautiful', 'full of juice', had 'a golden colour', was 'fragrant', 'fermenting', 'gave long life and immortality'.³

The herb growing on the heights from which the intoxicating and sacred Soma-Haoma beverage was originally prepared has not been identified with certainty. If it is the

¹ Edward Lehmann refers to Bahram Yasht, xiv. 48, where the difference between Ahurian and Daevian sacrifice is emphasized; Lehmann, *Zarathustra*, i, pp. 154 sqq.

² Yasna 32. 14.

³ Pavry, *Iranian Studies*, pp. 158 sqq.

species of Ephedra¹ which is now employed, it grows in Afghanistan. For many centuries this liquid, constituent of the sacrifice, has not been intoxicating. As often happens in the history of religion, what was once serious and real has lost its earlier potency. In early times Soma-Haoma gave the priests a blessed intoxication, lauded in the Veda hymns; and, according to the Avesta, where the Haoma hymn can be read in Yasna 9-11, it was so strong that Haoma 'makes the feelings of the poor man as great as the mind of the very rich', yea, as if he 'stood at the goal of all his desires'. 'Haoma intoxication lightens the mind.' In accordance with the stanza now quoted it is undeniably tempting to compare the bloody sacrifices with the sacred intoxicant Haoma in whose honour and worship the cattle were slain. Another Gatha passage² confirms this supposition.

When wilt thou smite the filth of this drink
 With which the Karapans evilly deceive (or intoxicate)
 And with which the wicked rulers of the lands deceive wilfully?

For the proper expression of his loathing the prophet-poet employs for 'this drink' the word *muthrem* which we have translated by filth; it really means urine: 'the urine of this beverage'—as Roth, Bartholomac, and Lehmann point out.

The ideal is drawn in 48. 11, 'good dwellings provided with pasturage and security from the bloodthirsty men of the Lie' (Dregvant, the worshippers of the Drug, the Lie): Peace and fixed homes for men busy with their cattle and with the land which they keep and prepare for their herds. This is no bad ideal.³ It is summarized in the lament of the Ox-Soul, 29. 10: Good dwellings and peace. The luck-bringing cow was created for man, not to be neglected and slaughtered but to graze in peaceful fields.⁴ Do we grudge the toiling population that has settled in these regions, comfort and security from shameless men and wayfaring bands who robbed what they could seize and suddenly destroyed what patient toil had accumulated? We can understand the glowing zeal of the prophet under the impul-

¹ Modi, *Haoma*, E.R.E. vi, p. 507.

² Yasna 48. 10.

³ Cf. Yasna 50. 2.

⁴ Yasna 47. 3.

sion of a social feeling for the lowly, for the security of human life, and the honour of peaceful labour.

When Zarathushtra speaks of such things, his words have a fervent ring. He exhorts his followers (45. 9) to seek the favour of the Lord 'who at his will maketh us weal or woe'. 'May the All-wise Lord by his Dominion (Khshathra) bring us to work for prospering our beasts and our men, so that we may through Right have familiarity with Good Thought.'

The titles of honour have already been mentioned. The first is 'cattle-tender' (29. 5, 31. 10). In the latter stanza (31. 10), 'the cattle-tending herdsman' and 'the non-herdsman' are opposed to each other. The second name of honour is the toiling 'keeper of the pastures', Vastrya (29. 6, 51. 5; cf. 48. 11 and 50. 2). The opposite, Avastrya, he who is not zealous for the grass fields (31. 10), but is guilty of heedless violence towards the cattle and the fields and destroys the pastures (32. 10, 44. 20), he is branded most emphatically. When the prophet inexorably divides existence into two classes of people with rewards for the good and cruel punishment for the evil in the other world, this view is based on the social-economic contrast just mentioned.

The contrast between good husbandry and bad husbandry, between good and evil chiefs (48. 5), rests upon a religious contrast. The chiefs and clans surrounding Zarathushtra worship demons, devils, whose real divine names we do not know, though among them we have already surmised Haoma, possibly also Mithra. They are comprehended in the Lie, Drug. In contrast to them, Zarathushtra worships and serves the Lord, Ahura, the All-wise, Mazdah, for the sake of farmers and the cattle.

III

Who were the Daeva worshippers that are constantly opposed in the Gathas? Reference has been made, plausibly enough, to the ancient enmity between Turanians and Iranians concerning which the tradition and history of Iran immortalized by Firdausi have much to say. The peoples comprised under the name of Tur or Turan harassed the Median and Persian kingdoms from the north-east. According

to a late tradition Zarathushtra himself was killed in a raid made by the Turanians at Balkh.

The Turanian Fryanā is named in the Gathas,¹ however, not as an enemy, but with the commendation that he had adopted the right faith. The Gathas also relate, as Lehmann points out,² that the Ahura worshippers and the Daeva worshippers dwelt close together. It is necessary to protect the new convert from his former co-religionists.³ It is manifest that the poet or poets in the Gathas do not refer to occasional raids but to a contrast which is felt daily and hourly. Nor can we escape the conclusion that even before the time of Zarathushtra a relative distinction must have existed between tribes and classes and clans who worshipped the Daeva gods and others who worshipped Ahura or several Ahuras. But the prophet was the first to sharpen this contrast to the point of incompatibility between good and evil, in making it the background of his social-ethical zeal and reforms. C. P. Tiele compares the opposition between Yahveh and Baalim in the Holy Land after the Israelite conquest.⁴ The comparison is a halting one in several respects. In this respect, however, it sheds light on the problem; that the Baalim had been worshipped as gods by the inhabitants of Canaan and had presumably been adopted by the immigrating Israelites in addition to their own god Yahveh until the prophets in the name of the Mosaic legislation raised the war-cry against Baalim and changed the name of the cult to idol worship, the worst crime known to the higher prophetic religion. A certain difference had already existed between Baal worshippers and Yahveh worshippers. Through the prophets it became a contrast. Something like this happened in Iran. Ahura-worshipping tribes or clans and Daeva-worshipping classes lived near each other and were intermingled. It was owing to Zarathushtra alone that it became a crime to worship Daevas. This was due to his conviction of the obnoxious character of current conditions and of the common life of the clans and the classes. In what, then, did this contrast really consist? It

¹ Yasna 46.

³ Yasna 46. 5.

² Lehmann, op. cit., ii, p. 147.

⁴ Tiele, *Geschiedenis*, ii, p. 147.

has been the custom to refer it to a transition from the nomadic state to the agricultural. But, as we have seen, the Gatha literature is unaware of ploughing and sowing, nor is there any description of Bedouin life. Consequently, Zarathushtra's strictures cannot refer to the contrast between the nomad and the farmer. One fixed point we have, and that is the fact that the countrymen, whose cause Zarathushtra champions so fervently, were permanently settled and wanted peace for themselves, their homes, their cattle, and their well-cared-for pastures. Perhaps we may conclude from this, that their adversaries, who worshipped Dæva gods with bloody sacrifices and orgies were, in part at least, without permanent dwellings, but wandered around, levying tribute on the herds of cattle when an opportunity presented itself. But it is certain that some, if not all of them, were permanently settled also. We recall the episode when Zarathushtra and his horses were standing in the winter cold outside the building where a Kavi dwelt, and were not admitted. Kavi, afterwards Kai, in the heroic poem of Iran, is the name of the old royal family which gave renowned heroes to Iran. In the Gathas the name seems to be either an appellative signifying a noble or warrior or else it is the proper name of a mighty clan which with its numerous members dominated the situation until one of them, Vishtashpa, allowed himself to be convinced by Zarathushtra's preaching and social ideals. Before it came to signify the hero family of Iran, glorified by Zamyad Yasht and Firdausi, Kavi was a title of chiefs and kinglets in eastern Iran. In many countries and at different times history affords examples of such predatory knights living on the labouring and defenceless country people.

Zarathushtra was a priest. In one passage of the Gathas,¹ as Lehmann points out, the word *Zotar* occurs—the title of the sacrificing priest. Had he himself formerly been one of those Karapan, the priests whom he branded so furiously in the Gathas? Anyhow, he heard the cry of the cattle, and yet more, he perceived that the distress of the cattle and the countrymen ascended still higher up to the Lord, Ahura,

¹ Yasna 33. 6.

who was the protector of peaceful work and of cattle-rearing. It was by the ordinance of Ahura, and not by his own will, that he had been appointed to bring to an end the insecurity and the misery which had filled his strong soul with indignation. However, for all his eloquence and artistic poetry and preaching, he was still a weak and impotent defender until, from the ranks of the nobles and warriors, Vishtashpa came forward to share in the courageous work.

C. P. Tiele, E. Lchmann, and A. Meillet have shown clearer insight into this problem than most others and have surmised what I believe to be the answer to the question. We need only consider the medieval castles of Europe to find, *mutatis mutandis*, examples of a warrior caste living on the fruits of the diligent toil of the peasantry. These gentry themselves hardly condescended to any productive labour. The aristocracy of eastern Iran took small notice of the desires and welfare of the lowly. The third class existed to labour and slave for the two others, the nobles and priests. It had no rights itself, but was the victim of the caprices of the great. These predatory knights lived well on the fruits of the cattle-tender's work in an unfertile country. We are far from the fertile plains of Media. It is impossible, with some students, to make Zarathushtra come from the ancient agricultural region, applying in these Eastern districts the lessons which he had previously learned. But Zarathushtra's indignation was aroused; his zeal was kindled. He could not with equanimity see a state of things which was taken for granted by the Dacva-worshippers. The prevailing religion was the religion of the predatory upper classes. Zarathushtra brought about a revolution. His divinity with its genii was the protector of peaceful, orderly work. The cattle shall suffer no longer. The imagined superiority of the Kavis and their priests shall be ignominiously rejected. Honour to whom honour is due. The once despised care for the pastures and the cattle is exalted to be the service of the All-wise Lord. The time-honoured cult of blood becomes an abomination. Zarathushtra lays the foundation of or provides an outlet for that positive appreciation of peaceful labour which became the strength of the Iranian and Persian civilization.

The scantiness and enigmatical nature of the sources leaves several questions unanswered. We surmise that the divine 'Lord' (Ahura) who bears the name of the 'Wise' or 'All-wise' (Mazdah) even before the prophet and independently of him, as shown by the great inscription at Behishtun (unless that is influenced by the prophet's ideas), favoured peaceful work and civilization. Professor A. B. Keith writes that Zarathushtra 'doubtless merely brought to a head tendencies which had been developing before his time'.¹

Zarathushtra became a social reformer. He could not bear to see robbery go unpunished and the fruits of labour spoiled. But how this righteous anger was kindled in his soul and how his zeal for the cattle and their tenders was connected with revelations from the Lord and the other celestial powers is beyond our range of vision. They revealed themselves to him in such a way that the divinities of the natural religion fell back before him.

The Ahura recognized by the prophet in Mazdah, the All-wise, became by his moral demands and his pure divinity not a god among gods, but God.

IV

So tangible and vivid is the situation in the Gatha texts. Such a picture of civilization and such an endeavour as we have now encountered in the words of the hymns cannot be banished to the sphere of myth or legend. But we are faced with a strange contrast. The language is archaic, obscure; the order of the words extremely intricate. Even if we assume that the text may have been mutilated in course of time and in the vicissitudes of Zarathushtra's prophetic religion after the time of Alexander, the fact remains that the original text exhibits high skill in the art of poetry. The Gathas are composed in a complicated and sustained metre which with extremely few exceptions does not otherwise occur in the sacred literature of the Mazdah religion. The Gathas display a notable sureness of style. Comparison with the Veda hymns of the earlier period leads us to suppose that the art of verse was highly developed even in Indo-Iranian times

¹ Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, pp. 32-3.

before the eastward-bound Aryans had been split between India and Iran. Zarathushtra or his friends were able to move in this heavy artificial armour, so to speak, and these queer, twisted, complicated, and abstruse expressions. From these complicated verses and stanzas we can picture a very early and simple civilization and a burning prophetic zeal: truly a strange manner of expression for a man possessed by a religious, social, and moral enthusiasm and desiring to influence a population partly nomadic and partly settled! Must not his zeal burst the bonds of form? The thing would be still more incomprehensible, did we not know from India and Scotland and Iceland that well-turned artificial poetry can coincide with very primitive external circumstances. Zarathushtra had evidently inherited an artistic culture which enabled him to clothe his vocation and fortunes in an elaborate form.

It is certain that sacrificial songs appertained to the sacrificial rite even in Indo-Iranian times. Herodotus relates of the ancient Persians what was also true of Iranians and Indians in early times, that they had no shrines and altars but sacrificed to Heaven, which they called Zeus, on mountain peaks. Moreover, they sacrificed to the sun, moon, earth, fire, water, and winds. We recognize as the objects of religious worship and rites, beside the sun and moon, the four elements, which according to the taboo-rules of the later Avesta religion, were guarded by strict laws of purification. The purity of the four elements was *inter alia* the motive in the Iranian religion of the primitive nomadic custom of exposing the dead to the fowls of heaven. The motive was to prevent the impurity of the corpse from defiling earth or water, fire or air. Herodotus says that the victims were killed, cut up, the flesh being boiled and then spread out on the soft grass. This having been done and the officiant having prayed for the welfare not only of himself, but of all Persians as well as the king, 'a Magus stands by and chants an appropriate theogony, for such the Persians call the chant. Without a Magus it is not lawful for him to offer sacrifice.'¹ J. Charpentier and others not without reason have seen in

¹ Herodotus, i. 131 sq.

this description a picture of the divine service common to Indo-Iranians and possibly, indeed, to the earliest Aryans or Indo-Europeans.

The author (or authors) of the Gatha hymns was surely acquainted with such liturgical songs and theogonies though we cannot define his relation to the powerful priestly caste of Persia, called the *Magi*.

The subject and the text become yet more complicated because of the continually recurring names which in the later Avesta and the Mazdah religions denote celestial beings with particular spheres of the creation. In the Gatha texts they bewilder the reader and render exact comprehension difficult.

Although the name *Amesha Spenta*, 'Holy' or 'Gracious Immortals', occurs in the later Avesta only, the heavenly figures, the archangels, the satellites of Ahura Mazdah, are derived from Gatha-theology. The six spirits who together with Ahura Mazdah later form a heptad are all mentioned in one Gatha stanza (47. 1).

By his holy Spirit (*Spenta Mainyu*) and by Best Thought (*Vahisstem Manah*; *Vohu Manah*, Good Thought), deed, and word, in accordance with Right (*Asha*, *Asha Vahishta*), Mazdah Ahura with Dominion (*Khshathra*, *Khshathra Vairya*, the desired Dominion) and Piety (*Armaiti*, *Spenta Armaiti*, holy Devotion) shall give us Welfare (*Haurvatat*) and Immortality (*Ameretat*).

But the Gathas know nothing as yet of the Heptad. In the Gathas *Spenta Mainyu*, the Holy Spirit, is distinguished from Ahura Mazdah. Atar, the god of fire, who later had such great importance, *Geushurvan*, the 'Ox-Soul' and *Sraosha*, 'Obedience', and others belong in the early times to the same circle.

Vohu Manah and *Asha* are most intimately connected with the All-wise Lord. 'Good Thought' is the state of mind which pleases God, and as a person he teaches men the will of God, the good manner in which the pious man is to treat everybody and everything, the cattle also. He is the heavenly Protector of men and of communities on earth. *Asha* or *Arta*, the Vedic *Rita*, is taken over by the Gathas from the East Aryan religion. It signifies the established,

duc, right, and lawful Order, especially with regard to sacrifice and worship, and therefore Piety. But also the divine world-order and all duties of men towards the divine powers are included. Atar, the fire, is closely connected with Asha as means of purity and holiness and as sacrificial fire. Khshathra denotes the dominion or the kingdom of the Lord in heaven and on earth, where it is realized as a theocracy by a ruler, obedient to the priests and therefore good. Armaiti is an old Aryan earth-goddess. In the Gathas she signifies the right, obedient disposition, that is devotion, and is regarded as the Genius of pious resignation. She is also concerned with dutiful action in its whole compass, and her old mythological character is not quite extinct. She appears amongst Iranians as well as amongst Indians as the earth goddess, Mother Earth; she provides well for her children and is called Spenta, 'the Holy', or 'the Gracious'; and she represents devotion and submission. In the Gathas she is related to the earth, as protectress of agriculture. The two closely connected interests of Zoroastrian faith are to be found together in her, viz. the duty of worship and ardent pious labour on the land. More subordinate are Haurvatat and Ameretat, wellbeing, prosperity, and immortality; they are often in the Gathas mentioned simply in this sense, without being personified. Or they are the food of Mazdah, eternal powers given by Ahura. As spirits they are connected in worship with the sacrificial food, Draona, and perhaps with the sacred beverage.

The significance which the Amesha Spentas assume in the later Avesta as personified archangels can be discerned to some extent already in the Gathas, as germs or as relics. Vohu Manah (in Pehlvi Bahman) is the watchman of the heavens and guide of the pious dead, and lord of domestic animals. Asha is the genius of fire. Khshathra is the lord of metals. Armaiti is the goddess of the earth. Haurvatat and Ameretat are the genii of all watercourses and plants, and the genii of fertility and abundance. This connexion of the genii of Ahura with special departments of nature seems, at least as regards some of them, to be older than the Gathas. These genii appear again and again in the company of the

Lord. In Yasna 45. 4, Mazdah is denoted as the father of Good Thought, and Armaiti, Piety or Devotion, as the daughter of Mazdah, but the entire Gatha-literature bears witness that this does not imply the existence of a mythological divine family. It must be explained by the position of the All-wise Lord as creator.

For the solution of this confusing problem James Darmesteter turned to the Hellenistic conception of the *Logos*, based upon 'hypostasis', to be translated by *Vohu Manah*, &c. He refers to Philo. Chronology alone makes the hypothesis impossible. The latest translator of the Gathas, Maria Wilkins Smith, has hit upon a new way out of the difficulty. She makes the bold attempt to comprehend Asha, Vohu Manah, and all those beings who in a younger Gatha text, Gatha Haptanghaiti, and afterwards were comprised under the name of the 'Holy Immortals', or 'Gracious Immortals', Amesha Spenta, as attributes of the Lord, Ahura, the God of the prophet. Mazdah also is interpreted by M. W. Smith as an attribute, 'Wisdom', ascribed to Ahura. The attempt cannot be consistently carried out. She translates Mazdah by 'the Wise One' (30. 11), Mazdah by 'O Wise One' (34. 7), Mazdah Ahura by 'O Wise Ahuar' (45. 11)—personal appellations, in disagreement with her theory, but certainly correctly. It seems to me hazardous to deprive these words of their reference to persons and beings which some of them, in all likelihood, possessed even prior to Zarathushtra.

V

I

To this day we feel through the texts the pulsation of Zarathushtra's strong spirit in spite of the heavy form of his social ethical preaching. But—and this is our second, more important point—his reforms were more than an improvement of the conditions of mankind. They were a divine commission. The circumstances, which grieved and stirred him to unrelenting resistance, were condemned as flagrant ungodliness. We do not understand Zarathushtra until we

see in the Gathas the underlying cause of his zeal: *the meeting with God*.

We have already in Yasna 29 heard how Zarathushtra was impelled to his task. Since the prophet there is alone, equipped indeed with the gift of speech (Yasna 29. 8) which he prays for (44. 17): 'That my voice may be effectual,' and comes to the succour of mankind and the cattle without worldly support, Yasna 29 is presumably older than the first Gatha poem, Yasna 28, which mentions Vishtashpa, the chief who became the protector and helper of the prophet and who is therefore abundantly praised. L. H. Mills, as I have since observed, places Yasna 28 after Yasna 29.

The call of Zarathushtra took place in such a manner as to give him a place not only among the benefactors of the race, but also among the heroes of religion. He met God, perceived him, was overwhelmed by him. He perceived that God, Ahura, is the first and the last, the Lord of the deeds of life.

'I conceive of thee, O Mazdah, in my thought, that thou, the First, art (also) the Last—
that thou art Father of Good Thought, for thus I apprehended thee with mine eye—
that thou didst truly create Order (Right, Asha, Arta), and art the Lord to judge the actions of life.¹

The prophet knows more. The All-wise (Mazdah) in the beginning by his Good Thought (Manah, Spirit) created the corporal and the spiritual, *gaēthâscā*, *daēnâscā*, corporal and spiritual beings (31. 11). When we are told in the same stanza (31. 11) that the All-wise provided life, *ushtana*, with body, material existence, *astvant*, our mind turns to the doctrine of the later theology that the spirits created at the outset by the Lord, the *fravashis*, in a new period of the twelve-thousand-year existence of the world were provided with bodies in order to fight against the Evil One. It is frequently hard to know how much Zarathushtra knew and taught of what was afterwards included in the system of the Avesta belief. It is certain that for him Ahura is the Creator in a wider sense than in the later Avesta. According

¹ Yasna 31. 8.

to Yasna 44. 5 Ahura created light and darkness, sleep and waking, morning, noon, and night, which remind the wise man of his duty. We may compare Deutero-Isaiah xlv. 7: 'I form the light and create darkness.' As Cyrus, the Lord's anointed, is there spoken of, the passage has been deemed to express opposition to the Persian dualism, but it agrees entirely with the Gatha stanza.

The prophet reveals or rather hints how he had seen in a mystery the Lord's work from the beginning.

'As the holy (Spenta, beneficent) One I recognized thee, Mazda Ahura,

When I saw thee in the beginning at the birth of Life,
When thou madest actions and words to have their meed—
Evil for the evil, a good Destiny for the good
By thy power at the last turning-point of the creation.'

This stanza spans the whole of existence from the creation at the beginning of the world to the last decisive 'turning-point' together with judgement and completion. Was the prophet present at the creation of the world? The secret of his soul escapes our analysis. The prophet had an experience that was decisive for time and eternity. He had recognized the All-wise as the beneficent and good spirit (as stanza after stanza in Yasna 43 declare). He heard the call: 'Thou didst tell me, go and teach Right (Asha, Order)' (43. 12). The prophet knew that he was selected for this task from the beginning. He was chosen from eternity. 'For this I was set apart as thine in the beginning' (44. 11). This certainty Zarathushtra shared with some of the prophets of the Old Testament.² Truly he might term himself 'initiated', understanding, *vaedamno* (43. 14). He did not shrink back when Ahura spoke to him (45. 5):

'I will speak of what the most Holy (or Beneficent) said to me, the word which is best for mortals to hear: "Those who for my sake give obedience to him (Zarathushtra) shall all attain to Welfare and Immortality through deeds of the Good Spirit", said the All-wise Lord.'

Zarathushtra made his decision. 'And thus Zarathushtra himself, O Ahura, chooses that spirit of thine that is holiest' (43. 16).

¹ Yasna 43. 5.

² Jer. i. 5; Amos vii. 15.

In the vocation hymn, *Ushtavaiti-Gatha*, 'the hymn on bliss', so-called from the initial word: 'Bliss to whom bliss is due, to whomsoever the Lord All-wise may grant bliss' (*Yasna* 43), Zarathushtra tells how he has recognized *Mazdah Ahura*, the All-wise Lord, as the Holy or Gracious, *Spenta*. In the last stanza the same epithet is employed in the superlative, *Spenishta*, of the genius or spirit or archangel which in the later *Avesta* bears the standing name of *Spentamainyu*. The prophet's decision consists in his choosing for himself the most sacred spirit. At the same time he prays that *Asha*, the Right, the Order, may appear full of life and strength in order that Resignation, *Piety*, *Armaiti*, may abide in the sunny Dominion, *Khshathra*, and that the Good Thought, *Vohu Manah*, may give reward to men according to their works (43. 16). In several places Zarathushtra certifies his willingness; he cries to God and the heavenly beings for succour.

The prophet, who lifts his voice in prayer, O *Mazdah*,
is a friend of Right (*Asha*), Zarathushtra.

May the Creator of Wisdom teach me his commands
through Good Thought

That my tongue may have a pathway.¹

Oddly enough, the *Gatha* songs, otherwise so averse to any embodiment of the divinity, and unacquainted with divine images, bear undeniable testimony to the fact that Zarathushtra's certainty was the result of a vision, a visible manifestation (*Yasna* 33. 6) to the priest Zarathushtra.

Although Zarathushtra relates that he had 'seen' and perceived the Lord, the All-wise, there is yet no hint in the *Gathas* of the figure of God. Zarathushtra's religion neither knew nor acknowledged any image of God. And though *Mazdah* worship in later times sinned against this rule—the sacrificial hymn dedicated to *Anahita*, the great goddess, in the later *Avesta* evidently describes a divine image—the prophet's influence was so great that *Mazdah* worship remained free from images and knew no idols. The representation of *Ahura Mazdah* with the winged solar disk—probably of Egyptian origin²—was hardly intended for

¹ *Yasna* 50. 6.

² Moulton, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

worship. It has no connexion with Zarathushtra's reform. The Parsees say that these images have reference to the Fravashi. In any case the representation of the Lord is at variance with the spirit of Zarathushtra. Prohibition of images, as with Moses, does not occur in the Gathas. But Zarathushtra worshipped his Lord, the All-wise, and his heavenly beings without images. Herodotus knew that the Persians did not approve of images. Cicero gives in *De Legibus* the ancient Persian view (afterwards adopted by Islam) that the campaign of Xerxes was aimed at the idolatry of the Greeks. Xerxes burnt down the temples because they contained gods.¹

Nor is any prohibition of polytheism to be found in the Gathas. But the careful reader of Zarathushtra's prayers and poetical sermons will never imagine a Pantheon with many gods. The monotheism of the Gathas is not exclusive, like Mosaism. Other gods are not expressly forbidden. But for the prophet they do not exist. He is entirely occupied with the power and calling of Ahura Mazdah. The stubborn facts of life, the hard struggle that lay before the prophet, left him no choice. God is his only helper. What God? The question does not exist in the Gathas. Zarathushtra's name for God gives scarcely any information. In the Gathas, Ahura, the Lord, is an appellative used both of the divinity and of men, like the *Kyrios* of the New Testament. As a designation of divine beings, it is older than Zarathushtra and probably goes back to Aryan or Indo-Iranian times. Its counterpart in the Vedic religion is *Asura*, a group of divine beings, who, even in early times, were distinguished for sorcery and magic power, but who had not then obtained the secondary significance of dangerous or evil spirits, as in the Avesta the *Daevas*, in India the common designation of divine beings, became devils. The chief Asura of the Rigveda, *Varuna*, the high divinity of the firmament, the night and the moon, has often been compared with Zarathushtra's Ahura. But there is an essential difference which is very illuminating. Varuna is the proper name of a god. Ahura, Lord, can be used of men and gods. With Zarathushtra,

¹ Cicero, *De Leg.* II. x. 26; Moulton, op. cit., p. 391.

however, it almost becomes a proper name. And this came about in his personal experience. The divinity by whom he was visited and who manifested to him his power and righteousness from the beginning of the world until the approaching final 'consummation', was simply the Lord, the Lord of Zarathushtra and all right-minded men and good beings, the Creator and Judge. The other main word for God in the mouth of Zarathushtra expresses the essential attribute of Ahura. He is the 'Wise', the 'All-wise', Mazda. The origin of this divine name is obscure. Both historical probability and analogy in the history of religion lead us to assume that Mazda, with Ahura, as the name of the divinity, existed long before Zarathushtra. Instead of the Lord, Ahura, or the All-wise, Mazda, Zarathushtra not infrequently calls God Mazda Ahura, in two words declined separately, the All-wise Lord. Subsequently, in the later Avesta, the two words are otherwise juxtaposed, so as to make one double name for God, *Ahura Mazda*, which never occurs in the Gathas as one word. The constituent parts of the double name are, however, declined separately in the Avesta. It is noteworthy that Darius I about 514-510 B.C., in his great inscription at Behistun, employs the same firmly established divine name in one word: Auramazda, who is there called the god of the Aryans. As it is scarcely conceivable that Zarathushtra split up a divine name, Auramazda, that already existed, transposing its parts to make Mazda Ahura, and as the unique authority of this divinity as highest divinity finds its explanation in the experience and revelation of Zarathushtra, a considerable period of time must have elapsed between the prophet's appearance and the time when the great king caused Auramazda, the long-established name of God to be engraved in his inscriptions.

The subject has been closely examined by Spiegel, Justi, Tiele, Geldner, Hommel, Darmesteter, de Harlez, Gutschmied, Windischmann, E. Lehmann, Chadwick, Casartelli, Bartholomae, Jackson, Geiger, Gray, Moulton, Meillet, Clemen, Pettazzoni, Nyberg, von Wesendonk, Beneveniste, and others. Even if E. Meyer's and Geldner's derivation of

the proper name *Mazdaka* about 715 B.C. from Mazdah is not quite certain, we must admit with Moulton that Hommel's discovery of the divine name *Assara Mazash* in an Assyrian inscription from King Assurbanipal's days proves its occurrence about 700 B.C., probably before Zarathushtra, and in any case so early that the appearance of the name in a document in a foreign state can scarcely be derived from the prophet speaking in the Gathas.

But Mazdah is not a mere proper name with Zarathushtra. It retains its signification of Knowing, Wise. We have already seen how urgent it is that man should have a right knowledge of the divine worship and its earthly obligations. Zarathushtra is himself a *vaedemno*, aware of things, a knower, initiated into the truth. All men should be like this. What Zarathushtra knows, that he speaks (28. 10). It is in his capacity of 'one who knows', *vaedemno*, that the prophet 'sees', or will see, the Lord, the Good Spirit, the dwelling of the Mightiest One, Ahura, and obedience to Mazdah (28. 5).

Zarathushtra had a share in the sacerdotal speculation which had been carried on of yore. In several places in the Gathas he calls himself a *vaedemno*, i.e. a knower, one initiated, one knowing the secrets of religion.¹ To be sure, no mystery-wisdom is contemplated in the Gathas. We will soon show how notable and, indeed, epoch-making in the history of religion this is. Knowing does not imply knowledge of rites, conceptions, and formulas, or of a technical language, which were unknown to all except the mystery-priests, but knowing here means knowledge of right and wrong, of God's power and will in contrast to the vagueness and chaos and destruction which prevailed in the world. It is probable that the very term 'knowing' arose out of the priestly speculation which even then was remarkable.

The conceptions as well as the divine intercourse of Zarathushtra are by no means profound. As we have seen, we have to do with an early stage of civilization. But the air is pure and wholesome. Labour, truth, right, obedience, the inexorable struggle against the powers of evil, against barbarism and destruction, the untiring endeavour to gain

¹ Yasna 28. 5, 30. 1, &c.

new ground for civilization and orderly settlement for men; peace, and comfort under good rulers, and the certainty that the struggle is not dubious, but will be carried to victory. Assurance of the support of Mazdah and the good beings for the faithful labourer, the assurance of prosperity, immortality and bliss beyond the bridge of decision in the dwelling of the Lord, whither songs of praise have preceded the pious man—such is the world of ideas in which Zarathustra moves.

His knowledge (Yasna 50. 5) does not consist of mysteries and secret traditions, he knows quite simply the difference between truth and falsehood, well-doing and ill-doing, the power of the Lord All-wise and the Lie (44. 10, 31. 17). This is what knowledge proclaims to one who by such a message himself becomes a knower and is no longer deceived like a one 'who knows not'.

In 31. 12 he that knows and he that knows not are placed in opposition. Ahura Mazdah himself knows most. He is the 'most-knowing' or 'perfectly knowing', *vaedishto* (32. 7). In the same stanza the 'knower', who does not commit any of the sins of the Liars, is mentioned (cf. 34. 7). The knower speaks in union with the knower, they are agreed as to the meaning of life; the non-knower must no longer deceive (31. 17).

To Ahura, who is in the prophet's eyes God, not one of the gods, the prophet stretches out his hands in prayer (28. 1, 29. 5, 50. 8)—evidently the correct attitude in worship and divine service. Hymns and praises are directed to him (34. 2, 34. 12, 45. 6, 45. 8, 50. 9) here in this life and hereafter in the dwelling of Ahura, which bears the name of the House of Song (45. 8). The All-wise Lord and his celestial genii are constantly the objects of prayer. The first hymn in our collection, Yasna 28, is a prayer:

With hands outstretched in petition for this support
I pray, O Mazdah, first for the deeds of the Beneficent Spirit,
O Right (Asha),
That I may satisfy the will of Good Thought and the soul of the
cattle.¹

¹ Yasna 28. 1.

He prays for the blessing of both worlds and celestial aid in watching over the soul of the cattle and resisting the hordes of robbers. 'Give, O Mazdah, Zarathushtra mighty help, whereby we may overcome foes' (28. 6). Because of these gifts the prophet and his friends cannot be dissatisfied with Ahura and his celestial powers but will eagerly offer to them laud and praise (28. 9). For the prophet knows that intercession and prayer will be effective with the celestial beings. Finally, he prays to Mazdah Ahura: 'Do thou teach me, O Mazdah Ahura, from thy spirit by thy mouth how it will be with the First Life' (28. 11), i.e. with existence in this world. It was the need of the cattle that first stirred the prophet, so he is concerned in the first place to know and rightly to inculcate the duties of terrestrial life.

But the prophet also desires to know what he has to expect, what will come to pass and not come to pass (31. 5). Ahura, who gives the best, Vahishta, paradise, is himself the best, Vahishta (28. 8). The prophet cries to him and his celestial beings:

'Come to me, O best ones, personally, O Mazdah, and visibly. O, Asha, Vohu Manah, that I may be heard also outside the covenanters (or those who have received the boon of the right faith). Manifest among us and clear be the august fulfilment of pledges.'¹

In the Gatha of misfortune, Yasna 46, the prophet calls upon Ahura in great distress: 'Rise up for me, O Ahura' (33. 12). He implores God in Yasna 44 and elsewhere for instruction. He is unwearied in his prayers for himself and his kin (49. 8) and for all good agriculturists, to pray for the reward in this world and the next. His prayers are his sacrifices (50. 9). Material good and future good are comprised in 'Immortality and Welfare' (or Health) where spiritual good is thus put first: *Ameretat* and *Haurvatat*. The prophet also prays for strength and endurance on the great day of judgement (51. 7).

Nowhere are Zarathushtra's feelings towards the divinity more beautifully expressed than in Yasna 45, the same Gatha which, in clear-cut words, defines the everlasting

¹ Yasna 33. 7.

and irreconcilable contrast between the two spirits, the spirit of the Lord and the spirit of the Enemy.

'I will speak of that which Mazdah Ahura, the All-knowing, revealed to me first in this life. . . . Not to be deceived in the all-seeing Ahura. . . . I will speak of him that is greatest of all, praising him, O Right, who is bounteous to all living. . . . Now have I seen with mine eyes what belongs to Good Thought, deed and word, an initiate through Right to Mazdah Ahura. . . . Him shalt thou seek to glorify through prayers of Piety, Him that is called All-wise Lord for ever.'¹

In Yasna 43 the Gatha of revelation beyond all others, there are described not one, but several occasions when Mazdah Ahura deigned to visit Zarathushtra and grant him insight into God's nature and work from the beginning of time to its completion. Zarathushtra recognized in Mazdah Ahura the Strong and Holy One (Yasna 43. 4).

First he recognized him in the creation of the world, when God determined the good for the good and the evil for the evil, which will be fulfilled at the end of creation (43. 5). Another time Zarathushtra was visited by the good spirit, Vohu Manah, who came and asked: 'Who art thou, to whom dost thou belong?' Zarathushtra answered: 'I am Zarathushtra,' and declared his honest desire to support the friends of right, and to fight against the followers of the Lie, Drug, to gain a place in the kingdom, praising, and singing the All-wise (43. 7, 8).

Is it the same occasion or another that is alluded to in the following verses: 'As the Holy one I recognized thee, O Mazdah Ahura, when Vohu Manah came to me'? To his question: 'For which wilt thou decide?' Zarathushtra answered that by a gift of adoration to the Lord's Fire, Atar, he desired to remember and acknowledge the Right, Asha (43. 9). Then happened the miracle that Mazdah allowed him to behold Asha, in that Mazdah came with Right and with Armaiti, Resignation, Piety. Armaiti certainly existed as a divinity before the time of Zarathushtra. In that case he seized on the spiritual meaning of the word

¹ Yasna 45. 3 sqq.

and saw in the earth a symbol of resignation, piety, devotion. Mazdah himself now invites his questions. For Zarathushtra is a mighty man, a man whose desire the divinity gladly fulfils (43. 10). Six times in this Gatha, at the beginning of every other stanza, after the introduction, the words are repeated: 'As the Holy one I recognized thee, O Mazdah Ahura, when . . .'. We cannot be sure whether Zarathushtra refers to all the revelations or whether he singles out from the one revelation in rhetorical amplification one after another the things which became certain and determinative to him. He was instructed by the spiritual beings (43. 11). He came to Asha, the Right, to be instructed (43. 12). Instruction was inseparable from obedience. The spirit of obedience, *Sraosha*, symbolized in the later Avesta by the cock, the bird of vigilance, which wakes the pious man so that early in the morning he may kindle the sacred fire, this same obedience it is that brings rich reward, bestowing gain or loss upon the two groups into which mankind is divided.

The prophet recognized the All-wise Lord as holy when Vohu Manah visited him to know his desire, and this desire was the long, blissful existence in his kingdom.

Notwithstanding the loftiness and power with which Mazdah revealed himself to the prophet, there is a dash of intimacy in this divine intercourse. Zarathushtra is a knower and initiated. His relation to the divinity is friendship shown him by Mazdah. Zarathushtra in his turn yearns to oppose unweariedly those who deny and thwart the will of the Lord and do not observe his word.

In the final stanzas of the Hymn of Revelation (Yasna 43. 15, 16) the importance of not pleasing the followers of the Lie is still inculcated, for the friends of the clan see in them the enemies of the prophet.

Five times in this Gatha it is repeated that Vohu Manah, the good spirit came to the prophet with his questions and instruction on behalf of the All-wise Lord. For the prophet longs and yearns for the best of all things—paradise; indeed, it is more than good, better than what men call good. This existence in the Kingdom (*Khshathra*) under the guidance of the Lord, together with his good genii, extends through the

physical life on this earth to the spiritual life in the future, eternal existence.

Zarathushtra is eager to learn and know. He wishes to understand the world and existence. Only Ahura can make all clear (44. 8). But the uttermost goal of his knowledge is the All-wise Himself. The prophet inquires about all kinds of things in heaven and on earth, temporal and spiritual. But he says: 'By these things I strive to recognize thee, O Mazdah, Creator of all things, through the Beneficent (or Holy) Spirit (Spenta Mainyu)' (44. 7).

It is Ahura's revelation which makes Zarathushtra a prophet. But there is an evident distinction between it and the experience of the Old Testament prophets. On Aryan ground we hear nothing of the terrific majesty of God. The date of Zarathushtra cannot be determined with certainty, but it is likely that his communion with the All-wise occurred not long before (or after) the call of the prophet Isaiah and the vision in the Temple, when the foundations of the thresholds were moved and the prophet tremblingly said: 'Woe is me, for I am undone.'¹ When Zarathushtra asks the Lord for an answer to his prayer, he says: 'One like thee, O Mazdah, might teach it to his friend, such as I am, and through friendly Right give us support' (Yasna 44. 1). The prophet communes with God as friend with friend. Even in the Gatha of Misfortune he asks the Lord for the support, which 'a friend gives to friend' (46. 2). Zarathushtra's conception of God is pure and lofty. We are certainly told that the prophet beheld the Lord, but we do not hear of any theophany; no image can reproduce the spiritual nature of Mazdah. Nevertheless, we are far from the terror and thunder of Sinai and from the voice that said: 'No man can see me, and live.'² Mazdah, too, had enemies who suffered his punishment here and hereafter. But he can in no wise be called 'a consuming fire',³ nor 'a jealous God'.⁴ The distance between God and man is not so great as in the divine intercourse of Moses and the other prophets. The holiness of God does not imply terror and peril. It was the peculiar

¹ Isa. vi. 4-5.

² Exod. xxxiii. 20.

³ Deut. iv. 24.

Exod. xx. 5; Deut. iv. 24; Joshua. xxiv. 19; Nahum i. 2.

task of the Semites to comprehend and teach to mankind the overwhelming and sovereignly gracious majesty of God. Yet the prophets also have expressions for the tenderness of God. And Philo knows that God can speak with man as friend to friend.¹

The atmosphere in Israel differs from that in the eastern Iranian region of Zarathushtra. Among the differences one especially may be mentioned, because in that Zarathushtra had an advantage over the prophets of the Old Testament. Moses and the earlier prophets know nothing of God's power beyond the grave.² Their gaze loses itself in the gloom of Sheol, until, by a process unique in the history of religion, the craving for righteousness and trust in God by their own irresistible necessity burst open the gates of Sheol, above all in Psalm lxxiii, without their being guided by conceptions of heaven and hell. From the outset Zarathushtra is aware of paradise as well as a place of punishment after death. He makes an unconscious contradiction of the Psalmist's words: 'In Sheol who shall give thee thanks?' Beyond the gates of death is exactly the place where the 'House of Song' is situated.

In other respects Zarathushtra resembles the prophets of Israel. He punishes and condemns as they do and is not content with prohibitions only. His ideal, as we shall see, is positive. 'The divine commandment runs: Thou shalt. As Edvard Lehmann points out, the right, *Arta*, *Asha*, answering to the *Rta* of India and the *ritus* of Latin, has in the Gathas a positive character.³ It is striking how small a part the conceptions of holiness and taboo play in this teaching—just as they do in that of the prophets of Israel with the exception of Ezekiel and, in part, Malachi. Much greater is the space allotted to taboo-holiness in Vendidad.

Like the prophets, Jeremiah particularly, Zarathushtra founds a personal religion. Every one must make a decision, man for man or man against man. A choice is made, a distinction arises. It is no longer a question merely of a national, but of an individual religion.⁴

¹ H. A. Kennedy, *Philo's Contribution to Religion*, p. 183. ² Ps. vi. 5; lxxxix. 48.

³ Lehmann, op. cit. ii, p. 96.

⁴ Lehmann, op. cit. ii, p. 19.

The prophet had been appointed by Ahura to be a Ratu, judge, between the two parties.¹ The task which would fall to him at the approaching judgement and the consummation of the world begins for the prophet even in this life. It is seen in the stanza which seems to know not only the contrast between the evil and the good, but also the irresolute who in the later theology were allotted a special third place between paradise and the place of punishment. Its name, *Hamistakan*, is formed from a word in this verse, *hemyasait*, 'are mixed' or 'counterbalance each other'. Ratu, the judge, Zarathushtra, will deal justly with the followers of the Lie and the pious, as well as with those in whom the good and the evil 'are mixed' or 'counterbalance one another' (33. 1). To the honest pasture-keeper (31. 10) who gains possession of the cow and worships 'the Lord of the two destinies', there is promised a just Ratu, judge (doubtless Zarathushtra) (51. 5), who is above all 'a true foe to the Liar' (43. 8).

The prophet won the favour of the people because he could teach the right and profitable ways both in this physical world and in the spiritual world, the ways which lead to the dwellings of Ahura (43. 3). He was a follower of Ahura, faithful, knowing, and beneficent (43. 3).² He who joins the prophet and thus opposes the devils and the mortals who oppose the prophet will gain as friend, brother, and father, the beneficent (holy, *spenta*) religion (*daēna*) of the deliverer (Saoshyant), i.e. Zarathushtra (45. 11).

Through his clan and, yet more, by his family connexions, a member of the warrior class or knights, the ruling element of the community, and himself a priest, Zarathushtra became the defender of the country people. His motive, however, was not the love of liberty. He was not concerned with the relations between rulers and ruled. He did not start or favour a social rising. But it was an outrage to his soul to see how the toilsome labour, by which all men lived, was treated with scorn and despoiled by the mighty. He thrilled with a passion for order, labour, and peace. He found the faith and worship of his time unworthy. God revealed him-

¹ Yasna 31. 2.

² For the signification of Spenta see M. W. Smith, op. cit., p. 56.

self to him as the protector and upholder of right, goodness, and fidelity.

2

Something extraordinary happened among the mountains of Bactria. The history of a soul became the determining factor in the spiritual development of a people and a great kingdom. A spiritual, moral, and social regeneration is bound up with the name of Zarathushtra. He had a spiritual inheritance in the shape of worship and sacred formulas. The art of poetry was highly developed; comparable to the oldest Veda poetry, both of them to be traced back to older, now vanished cult-hymns and sacred songs. Zarathushtra and his friends, one or more of whom, as Mills and others imagine, may have collaborated in the making of the Gathas, taken over and developed the cumbersome form of the cult-hymn. And, strangely enough, a new content of rudely practical materiality is inserted into this ingenious frame. The intercourse of Zarathushtra with his God was not the result of any human teaching. He had met God himself. Ahura speaks to him as friend to friend. When he looks around him, his inmost being is stirred. He is called by God himself to the difficult task of protecting and raising the lower classes and defending their right to peace and labour and comfort in the face of arbitrary oppressors and violent neighbours. God who called him is the Lord, Ahura; he is the All-wise, Mazdah. He is surrounded by genii or angels who almost give the impression of qualities. Most of them, at any rate, have existed previously. They do not encroach on the majesty of Ahura. We are here confronted with a veritable prophetic monotheism. To this there is no road from polytheism. We seek in vain in the Gathas for speculation on the many gods and the One Being.

The speculation which, by this time, had gone far in India and which, seeking unity in diversity, was at last to attain the One only Divine Being in the All, whether it was comprehended as a personal divinity or as an impersonal state of being—this entire development lacks any counterpart in Iran. On the contrary, there comes forward in Iran a

priest so possessed and thrilled by God that for all time by his revelation of God's will and work he became a determining factor in the belief and divine service of his followers and his nation. He calls himself initiated, 'knowing', aware, Vaedemno, but he had not obtained his insight by speculation or the teaching of others but by divine revelation; not by pondering over the world and men and gods, but by an immediate, overwhelming impression. The matter may well be conceived in this wise: Zarathushtra's pondering and brooding on the problems of men and divine service and the supernatural powers, rendered acute by outward distress and inward questioning, begat a certainty in a sudden illumination which made him the prophet of Ahura, the teacher of the people and the guardian of the cattle. In the divine power that overwhelmed him he recognized Ahura, the Lord. God had revealed himself to Zarathushtra, called him to be a prophet and manifested to him his will and faithfulness in such manner as to exclude all equals or rivals. Gods who peradventure had been placed by the side of Ahura in the worship of the people and, perhaps, been very closely connected with the bloody sacrificial service became in Zarathushtra's eyes, because of their connexion with the destroyers of the country and the cattle, evil beings, Daevas, who find their centre and climax in Drug, the Lie. Zarathushtra did what the religious leaders and mystics of India never did. He gave a clear and ringing No! to such worship, such common life, and such social forms as he felt obliged to condemn and oppose.

There is here at bottom the meeting of a solitary soul with God. We are concerned with a rare and fateful phenomenon in the history of religion; the prophet and the monotheism of the prophetic order.

We cannot here discuss how the suppressed popular gods once more recovered their position, so that they appear in the worship of the Achaemenians as well as in the later Avesta. Not even the kings and priests of Israel were always true to the jealous monotheism of Moses.

There is no trace in the Gathas of the methodical training and exercises practised by the medicine man or the ecstatic

in order to attain a supernatural state and gain communion with the divinity. The divine communion of Zarathushtra is spontaneous. To us, as to him, it is a mystery. We may reasonably speak of mysticism. But it is poles apart from drilled mysticism in its many, analogous forms. To feel the nearness of the divinity and to be burning in spirit, the soul of Zarathushtra needed no training. Life was full of tasks.

Zarathushtra takes a consistently positive attitude towards labour, the arts of civilization and earthly obligations. He lived in a region where a hard struggle had to be waged against the forces of nature. No religion has rated labour and cultural effort more highly; none has viewed more askance the training of asceticism and the consecration of idleness. It is quite in the spirit of Zarathushtra that a later writer, in a polemic against the asceticism of the surrounding higher religions, says: 'In our religion one does not fast from food, but from sin.' While, south-east of the homeland of the Gatha religion, in India, sacred impurity and unnatural practices have had unparalleled triumphs, and while the ascetic-mystic view of life, as late as Cardinal Bellarmine, who died in 1621, could hold, as he did, that a Christian ought not to kill the vermin on his body because we human beings look forward to eternal bliss, while insects can only have enjoyment in this life, the Mazdah religion, on the other hand, reckons the killing of noxious animals and vermin among the urgent duties of religion. The sacrament of penance in the later Avesta includes among the penitentiary exercises imposed for the granting of absolution: the killing of noxious animals, the covering of pits of offal, the procuring of implements for the tending of cattle, for draining and tillage, the erection of barns and bridges over water-courses, and the cleansing of dogs from vermin.

With Zarathushtra action is the issue of religion. Songs and hymns of praise are to be offered to Ahura and the other celestial beings. It may be even that the Gathas were composed for the regular divine worship. But the most acceptable kind of worship consists in the care of the pastures and the management of the cattle. Cult and ritual play but a

slight part in the religion of the Gathas. Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds, form a trinity common to religion in India and Iran. But while the Veda religion deems this to refer to the rites of worship, in the Gathas this trinity of Thought, Word, and Deed refers to the pious man's active life. Darmesteter points out that the Vedic words have a purely ritual significance—prayer, hymn, and sacrifice—and declares that this significance passed also into the Avesta in the days of the prehistoric Aryan language. Such an interpretation may be admissible or, at any rate, partially admissible in the later Avesta and the Pehlvi books, but with regard to the Gathas it is, as Moulton says, impossible.¹

The contrast in the Gathas is, as we have found, as acute and radical as possible. But it is by no means hostile to the physical existence; on the contrary, a right stewardship of the Creator's visible work is a mark of piety. We are here dealing with the prophetic religion of Zarathushtra and not with its later history. But an example from its later development may be adduced. Even in remote antiquity there were forebodings of the over-population of the earth. Sutra-kritanga, which belongs to the sacred writings of the Jina Order, says that Svayambhu, associated by commentators with Vishnu, fearing the earth would be over-full, called to his aid Yama, alias Mara, the god of mortality, who, assisted by Maya (illusion), causes men to die.² Iran has another solution: the earth is extended time after time by a third, to meet the shortage of space.

The labour and endeavours of mankind, the conquests of civilization, the whole of history as far as the eye can reach, are brought into the sphere of the prophet's intercourse with his God. Like the revealed religion of the Old Testament, Gatha piety also develops a true eschatology; the guiding hand of God and the endeavours of man have a goal to work for. Nowhere have the course of the world and its future consummation been so completely delineated as in the religion of Zarathushtra. Along with the fate of the individual after death there is depicted in the Gathas a terminus when world-evolution is ended by doom and consummation.

¹ Moulton, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

² Sutrakritanga, *S.B.E.* xlv, p. 244.

The prophet hopes that the great day, the crisis of the world, will soon come. Yet his mood is not dark and pessimistic. Industrious men of piety are Saoshyants, Benefactors, Helpers, 'Saviours' who 'make the world progress'.

In the eyes of the Mazdah religion, as afterwards in the view of Islam, the campaign of Xerxes, the great king, against the troublesome Greek states signified the endeavour of the one true God and the pure religion to crush polytheism and idol-worship. To us Marathon and Salamis shine out with indestructible glory. The treasures bestowed upon us by the Greek spirit, even as regards the eternal longing of the soul, the divine existence and the truth, will always be reckoned as the indispensable inheritance of our civilization and of the Church. All that is contained in the documents of the Mazdah faith will not bear comparison with them. But why should we compare? Why not give each its due? The Greeks were very conscious of their spiritual superiority. But in regard to the knowledge of the living God and his works, Dion Chrysostom in one of his famous lectures at the close of the first century said: 'But the strong and perfect chariot of Zeus has not been worthily sung by any of us, neither by Homer nor by Hesiod, but only by Zoroaster and the sons of the Magi who learned from him.'

Does God seek man or does man seek God? The alternative is a foolish one. The right answer was given by the poet-mystic Rumi, when he wrote that it is God himself who speaks in the invocation and prayer of man. If, however, we still ask the question, the former alternative is decidedly preferred in the Gatha texts. God sought out the chosen prophet, manifested himself to him and called him to his work. It was not Zarathushtra who brooded and thought and speculated on the many divine beings of popular belief and found the common factor, the One. It was rather the divine power that came to him in the hard struggle of earthly life so overwhelmingly, so intimately, so full of succour that unconditionally, without any theological distinctions, in this divinity, this lord, this Ahura whom in his capacity of 'knower' he called Mazdah, the Wise, Zarathushtra recognized the very fundamental power of existence. Other Indo-Iranian

or Iranian gods, whose names are authentically enumerated in Boghazköi from the middle of the second millennium, he must surely have known. We do not know if he directly opposed them and their worship, or if he merely ignored them in favour of his God and the beings surrounding him, which were manifested to Zarathushtra in the train of Ahura. This is what we mean by the creation of a prophet. This priest Zarathushtra became by a divine calling the prophet of his people and the confession which he bequeathed was a revealed religion, definitely founded, as distinct from a nature-religion or a culture-religion which, under the influence of human reflection, may issue in a mysticism that flees from and despises the world.

If we would see the prophetic religion of Zarathushtra in sharp outline, we may compare the Mazdah, the Ahura whose intimate friend he was and to whom he turned with hymns of praise in his distress, with the best-known Asura of India, Varuna, the heavenly god, lofty and majestic, knowing secret things, but never in the Rigveda hymns specially connected with any human being nor with any particular priest, nor with any historical exploit, nor passionately promoting an ideal of popular life and conduct.

Nevertheless, it was not the vigorous worship of Ahura, but the deep melancholy of Buddha brooding over the misery of existence and his way to the peace of Nirvana which conquered the millions of Asia. The revealed religion of Zarathushtra had a magnificent historical mission and still lives with honour among the small number of highly civilized and capable Parsees in Bombay and its vicinity, and in Yezd and in Kirman in Persia. But Zarathushtra had not fathomed the misery of human life nor the secret of evil, often as he speaks of the Lie and the myrmidons of the devils. The spiritual atmosphere of the Gathas is wholesome and bracing but, in spite of its eschatology, earth-bound. Zarathushtra never perceived the opposition within his own bosom. He fought against outward enemies and their spiritual helpers; the thralldom of guilt and corruption were unknown to him. He never penetrated to the problems of the soul. The natural lust of life had not yet begun to abate

in him and his contemporaries. His attitude towards the good things of life is yet naïve. Neither the corruptibility and vanity of existence nor distress of soul had brought him to the critical point when self-confidence and the natural man are slain and man is born, if it so be, to a new existence. Ahura Mazdah became his divine helper in the struggle for a better and more righteous community. The enemies of the prophet were the enemies of God. That is why the conquest of self never entered into his ethical programme. The art of overcoming evil with good remained unknown to him. He declared, on the contrary: that he who is good to an evil person becomes evil himself and worthy of punishment.¹ The world is to be renewed as far as Zarathushtra's view extends. Man must learn discipline, order, and labour. But we hear little of any renewal of the heart.

VI

The preaching of Zarathushtra in its quaint and artistic poetical setting has been seen to possess two main features. Besides (1) the social-ethical urge on behalf of the settled country population without legal rights in the face of arbitrary violence; and (2) the trust in, and worship of the Lord, the All-wise, with his beneficent powers or spirits, based on a mysterious personal experience, we add two other features which for long have attracted keen attention; viz. (3) the contrast in existence, the dualism; and (4) its extension beyond the limits of earthly life and present history, the eschatology.

Zarathushtra's preaching is entirely aimed at a decision between the two spirits and the two forms of life. Man is given an ineluctable choice.

'Hear with the ears the best things, look on them with clear thought. For decision must be made between the two confessions, man by man, every one for himself, before the great Thing (the judgement) comes: we must ponder on our instruction' (30. 2).

The opposition extends as far back as thought can reach. The famous Yasna stanzas, 30. 3 sq., speak of this:

'Now the two spirits in the beginning revealed themselves in

¹ Yasna 46. 6.

a vision (dream) as twins, being the better and the bad in thought and in word and in action, these two. And between these two the wise have chosen wisely, not the foolish' (30. 3).

When the two spirits first came together, they set up life and no life; and at the end of the world the worst existence will be the lot of the people of the Lie, but the pious shall receive the gift of the Best Thought, which is paradise. The poet's liberty of movement allows him, besides the ordinary expression *Vohu Manah*, to employ here *Vahishta Manah*, 'Best Thought', equivalent to the 'Good Thought'.

The prophet who appeals to the free decision of men finds the origin and explanation of the Lie, the Evil One, and of evil, in a choice.

'Of those two Spirits the Lie-minded chose to do the worst thing. The most beneficent Spirit chose Right, he, who is clothed with the massy heavens' (30. 5).

Then a choice was given to the *Daevas*. The spirits who are here called *Daevas* became the victims of an illusion when they took counsel and did not choose aright, but chose the 'Worst Thought'. Here, too, the poet is not content with the more common expression 'Bad Thought', *Aka Manah* (32. 5), but makes use of the superlative *Acishta Manah*. The circumstance that *Daeva*, which in India became the usual expression for divinity (cf. the Latin *divus*), in Zarathushtra's religion came to mean the evil, opposed, powers is possibly due to a trick of the language. It is improbable that a word *Dacva*, denoting divine powers, was changed by the prophet to a name for devils. Both *Asura-Ahura* and *Daeva-Deva* have been names of the superhuman precious and perilous powers.

Ahura, in accordance with a well-known phonetic law, is the Indian *Asura* and signifies divine being; the nearest equivalent is, perhaps, lord, ruler. An *Ahura* became the god of Zarathushtra and the highest divinity of Iran and the Avesta. One of the *Asuras* in the older *Rigveda* was the venerable and wise celestial god *Varuna*, who seems to have signified the starry sky or the night sky. The *Asuras* in India afterwards became evil, mischievous, and formidable beings. An opposite evolution occurs in the widespread

Aryan or Indo-European word for divinity, power, supernatural being, *Deva*, brilliant, shining, and signifying in India divine being in the most general sense. In the Gathas *Daeva* is the name of evil powers. The dualism of the Iranian religion in the spiritual world has no real counterpart in India, although Indian worship knows of malevolent beings. The languages are closely related. The oldest Iranian and the oldest Indian religions have the same name for hymns, *Gatha*, and for magic formulas, *Mantra*.

The scene in Yasna 30 is now transferred to human life. The Daevas sought the aid of violence, *Aeshma*, and, in so doing, brought ruin upon the world of man (30. 6). But he, who chooses right, obtains the Dominion (Khshathra) through Good Thought and Order (Asha, Right). Piety gives the body endurance and strength in order that the worshippers of the Lord may win the victory over the men of Lie at the retribution through metal. Molten metal was employed of old in Iran as the expression of divine judgement, ordeal. At the end of the world, according to the accepted eschatology, the molten ore from the mountains will lie on the ground like a shallow lake; it will feel to the pious like smooth milk, but will burn the ungodly. According to the Gathas the decision will be made by metal (30. 7), and by fire (31. 3). When punishment for crimes is awarded, Good Thought will, at the consummation, bestow Dominion on those who delivered the Lie (Drug) into the hands of Order (Right, Asha) (30. 8).

In the following stanza there occurs the significant word for the end of the world in the prophetic belief of the Avesta—*Frashokereti*, 'Forward-working', 'Promoting', the progress and perfection of the world. The term itself, the verbal substantive, is not found here in the Gathas but rather the thing, expressed with the same verb and adverb.

'May we then be those who make the world advance (*ferashem*, forward; *kerenaon*, make, with *ahum*, the world, as object).

By his labour the pious man himself contributes to the perfecting of the world and the happy issue. The Lie (Drug) will be destroyed by happiness. But they who have won a

good name, will obtain the promise in the good dwelling of the Good Thought, the All-wise and the Order (30. 10).

O Mortals, mark the prescription which the All-wise has ordained
Both well-being and pain, long suffering for the men of the Lie,
And happiness for the pious. After that shall be bliss.¹

The other main passage for dualism in the Gathas, Yasna 45, commences with a solemn exhortation:

I will speak. Now hear, now heed,
Ye from near and ye from far, who desire.
Now observe in your mind, all of you, he is revealed.²

What is it that calls for such attention? Answer:

I will speak of the two spirits at the beginning of the World,
Of whom the more Beneficent thus spake to the Enemy:
For us two nor thoughts, nor doctrines, nor wills,
Nor beliefs, nor words, nor deeds,
Nor consciences, nor souls agree.³

So runs the irreconcilable opposition between the two great powers of the world. The prophet has been instructed therein by the All-wise, the Lord. Those who do not faithfully carry out his preaching shall be smitten with woe at the end of the world and existence (45. 3). For happiness for those now living, those who have been, and those who will come, is obtained only from the All-wise Creator, Ahura (45. 7). Therefore let songs of praise be presented to him and laid up in the 'House of Song' which is heaven. Pious prayers shall be made to him (45. 10). To him who opposes the Dævas and their human adherents, the holy religion of the Saviour will be a friend, a brother, and a father. The word translated by Saviour, *Saoshyant*, and which here plainly refers to Zarathushtra becomes in the later Avesta the proper name of the final eschatological Saviour who is to be supernaturally born of the seed of Zarathushtra, and who will rise up to judgement, purification, and consummation. The name *Saoshyant* is used in the Gathas of all active men of piety. Every human being is called to be a saviour.

The Evil One, the adversary of the Lord, is called, as we have seen, Evil Thought (32. 5), Worst Thought (30. 5),

¹ Yasna 30. 11.

² Yasna 45. 1.

³ Yasna 45. 2.

but is really named, as afterwards in the great inscription of Darius, the Lie, in the Gathas *Drug* (31. 4, 33. 4), in the Behishtun inscription *Drauga*. This name indicates that we are not to see in Zarathushtra a creation of the intellect, a metaphysical system.

The intellect will find it difficult to apprehend the two spirits opposed from the beginning. Consequently 'Endless Time' appeared later on as a synthesis, a common eternal origin for the mutually hostile 'Twins'. In Zarathushtra we encounter no speculation. He has no interest in theory, theology, system. In vain also shall we seek mythology in the Gathas. Asha, Vohu Manah, Spenta Mainyu, Armaiti, Khshathra, Haurvatat, Ameretat, do not make any kind of divine family. There are no myths or tales about them. In the Gathas we do not breathe the atmosphere of speculation or mythology. The prophet's mentality and life are entirely governed by the fateful and deadly contrast between good and evil, as he saw it. His versified sermon on the two spirits from the beginning is a prolongation backwards, a metaphysical extension of this social, ethical, and religious contrast.

Nor has dualism any part in the antithesis between soul and body, spirit and matter, found in this natural and cultural religion, which is not advanced enough to include pessimism and cosmic pain. Physical life, as much as the spirits, is the creation of Ahura. The doctrine of the later Avesta that the Enemy Spirit created the evil portion of existence, things, animals, and men, and its careful division between the two spirits and worlds does not occur as yet in the Gathas. Here the dualism is due to a choice in the beginning. But Zarathushtra's opposition to his enemies is unrelenting. Even he who has been kind to a Dregvant, a follower of Drug, is himself a man of the Lie, who will go to the dwelling of the men of the Lie (Yasna 46. 6). The Gathas recognize two kinds of people, truth-speakers and liars, the knowers and the non-knowers (31. 12), the pious man and the man of lies (31. 17). People who do the worst should call themselves the beloved of the devils, *Daevas* (32. 4). The ungodly is designated an enemy, an adversary (34. 4). But

the enemies cannot encroach on the divine intercourse of the prophet.

If the antithesis is prolonged backwards behind all time, it is thus also prolonged forward, though not for ever; it will some time be repealed. The Lord will gain the victory. In the present medley and the hard combat the prophet constantly consoles himself and his followers with the coming settlement, with the torments of his adversaries as much as with his own bliss. The reward will come at last in the shape of punishment and joy (30. 4). Then there will be compensation for suffering (51. 4). The god-fearing will be taken into the good dwelling of the Lord (30. 10, 31. 20, 45. 7, 48. 7), which is the 'House of Song' (45. 8). The followers of the Lie have to expect long torture, the worst of all, as paradise is called the best of all (30. 11, 31. 20, 34. 7, 49. 11). The prophet exults to think that they who have done evil will be outwitted at last and will howl in their misery after having suffered death and bloodshed at the hands of good chiefs even here, so that the happy village folk may escape their attacks. He, who is the Greatest, will plague them with the fetter of death. And soon let it be! 'Rise up for me, O Ahura' (33. 12).

They, who have desired to condemn the worthy, despise the Order, the Right (53. 9). It is not impossible for a servant of Drug to be converted (33. 2). Otherwise, he must be overcome by arms (31. 18). For the evil spirits, Daevas, and their earthly counterparts can never govern and manage properly. They give up the cattle to violence (44. 20). Zarathushtra urges resistance to this violence: Aeshma, Violence, Fury, and Cruelty (48. 7, 49. 4). The adherents of Drug thirst for blood (48. 11). Though no one molests them or does them any harm, the adversaries do injury to the husbandman's cattle and men (31. 15).

But the adversaries of Zarathushtra were not mere workers of violence. They also had a theory. His cultural religion revolts against a view of life which did not share his solicitude for the Cattle and, if we are interpreting correctly, his reverence for the Sun, but which wasted the pastures and bore arms against the people of Asha (32. 10). The Ox and

the Sun are the most unpleasant things they can see, a reference to the sacrificial meal at night. What Zarathushtra loves and wishes to defend is the security of the settlement and the abundance of good pastures (48. 12). In Yasna 49. 4, we find one of the many summaries of this ethical-religious agricultural programme which, in the Gathas, always harp on the same string. It was carried out with great difficulty. The adversaries of Zarathushtra's agricultural ideal pay homage to Violence and Cruelty. It will turn out badly for them in the end. Happiness and riches will be the lot of true piety (49. 5). Earthly good is to own cattle and to care for their pasture and comfort (50. 2). 'Thine, O All-wise, is the Dominion whereby thou canst give to the right-living poor man the better portion' (53. 9).

Thus, piety for Zarathushtra consists mainly of a struggle against the adversaries. We are reminded of the constant cries of woe, curses and maledictions in the Psalms towards the oppressors when we read in Yasna 33. 2, that the pleasure of the All-wise Lord will fall upon them who by words or thoughts or the work of their hands (we find here already the standing trinity in the Avesta: thoughts, words, and deeds; cf. 33. 14), inflict injury on the Drug man and his helpers. But there is a manifest difference between the *Anavim* of the Psalms, powerless in this world, and the followers of Zarathushtra, eager to fight. When the prophet tells his revelations and how he answered and made his vow, he assures the divine beings: 'To the utmost of my power I will be a true foe to the Liar and give strong succour to the people of Asha' (43. 8). The prophet prays that Karapans, the hostile priests or people who do not obey the elementary laws of husbandry may be richly rewarded for the pain they inflict upon the cattle (51. 14). Torture and misery and death shall smite the foes of the villages and that immediately (53. 8).

The separation takes place at the bridge, *Peretu*, of the Separator, the Decider, *Cinvant*, which is named three times in the Gathas (46. 10, 11; 51. 13). In the later Avesta and Pehlvi books this bridge of doom is often mentioned and sometimes described. Incontestably, the good and evil are

separated immediately after death to endure punishment or enjoy bliss. But in addition to this doctrine of retribution the prophet has a sermon on a settlement in the last crisis of the world for which he ardently yearns. We have heard that the settlement will be carried out by means of metal (30. 7) and fire (31. 3, 32. 7, 34. 4, 43. 4, 47. 6). An eschatological mood is prevalent in the Gathas. On earth the horizon is not far off. Like other religious prophets in the line of the Biblical revelation, the prophet-poet might speak of 'the beloved last day'.

The Lord rules, rewards, and punishes the dead as well as the living. And the mission of the prophet extends beyond this life. As far as we know, Zarathushtra was the first of mankind clearly and unhesitatingly to teach a double retribution after death on moral grounds, and thereby a goal for existence with judgement and consummation.

Among all known tribes and races there is found a conception of the continuance of life after death in one form or another. When a real and vital belief in immortality appears, it is mainly due to three motives which are often intermingled, viz. the religious, the metaphysical, and the moral. (1) The victory over death can be gained by communion with the divinity, which is by its nature free from death. Thus, in the sun-theology of Egypt the dead are identified with the god and called by his name. Without any mythological apparatus, and without knowledge of heavens and hells, eternal life in the communion of God broke through the haze of death in the seventy-third psalm; the hymn expressing the victory of Trust in God over destruction and continued in the New Testament doctrine of eternal life. In other quarters man was assured of eternal life by initiation into divine mysteries as in Orphism, in Eleusis, &c. (2) In Greece as well as in India the distinction between soul and body was maintained. In Platonism as well as in Indian and Oriental salvation-doctrines the soul is part of the spiritual and eternal substance which remains in its purity after we 'have shuffled off this mortal coil'. (3) The motive may also be one of righteousness. Shall uncertainty and unrighteousness continue for ever? According as one or other of these

motives is dominant, the questions connected with death acquire the character of eternal life, the immortality of the soul, or retribution in the beyond. The three motives are intertwined. But the Gatha poetry leaves no doubt that in Zarathushtra's case, the doctrine of the future life which makes him unique in the history of religion finds its source in the struggle in which he was engaged.

It is likely that even before Zarathushtra's time there existed a conception as to dwellings of gods and spirits, good and evil, according to the quality of the spiritual powers. But Zarathushtra introduces as the fundamental doctrine of his preaching—decision, choice. His own faith and confession rose with prophetic earnestness against current practices and probably also against the prevailing cult. In Yasna 30 we read the confession. The one who knows gives to Ahura songs of praise, to Vohu Manah prayers, and awaits from Asha bliss. Then the prophet exhorts: 'Hear with your ears the best things' (30. 2), i.e. the choice between the two confessions, 'each man must bethink for himself before the Great Consummation; may it be accomplished to our pleasure' (30. 2). The 'Great Consummation' is also called the 'last turning-point' of creation (43. 5). Next we are told of the two spirits who revealed themselves in a dream as twins, viz. the Better and the Bad in thoughts, words, and deeds: between them the wise have made the right choice, but not so the foolish (30. 3). And why? Because the Daevas were struck with bewilderment, so that they chose the Worst Spirit and therefore also together with Violence outrage human life. For those who belong to the Lie happiness will be destroyed (30. 10). But those who make for themselves a good name receive the promised reward in the good dwelling of the Good Spirit, of Mazdah and of Truth, Right. The pain and torment, the 'long', probably 'everlasting', punishment for the followers of Drug, the Lie, are counterbalanced by the gain of the followers of Asha (30. 11).

Thus, all here aims at a choice, a decision. In the later Avesta all existence is divided into two parts. God created the good spirits and the good bodies, the good animals, the

good plants, and the good elements. The Evil One created the evil spirits, the bad animals, plants and objects, death and corruption. The whole creation is then rent in twain from the beginning and has no choice any more. Man alone has the power of choosing. This complete view is not found in the Gathas. Like all, however, who have been overwhelmed by the power of God and the seriousness of life, Zarathushtra taught a predestination, this being, however, not an inevitable fate, but an initial choice between the two groups and parties,¹ a choice between life and non-life, which the two spirits had created from the beginning, and which finally brings upon the adherents of Drug the worst existence and upon the followers of Asha the best abode (30. 4). 'The one who joins Drug chooses between these two spirits the worst line of conduct. But the holiest, or 'most beneficent', Spenishto, Spirit and those, who by right conduct please Mazdah Ahura, choose the right, Asha (30. 5). Zarathushtra is no fatalist. He urges and incites to a decision and he knows that a choice, made here in time, has eternal significance, thanks to the law of retribution (30. 7).

Evidently the terms fire and metal refer to the same thing, according to Yasna 51. 9, where it says that the retribution of both parties is accomplished 'by thy red fire, by the molten metal', viz. tribulation for the followers of Drug, gain for the followers of Asha. The division will be performed by fire through the Holy Spirit.²

We cannot be sure how much Zarathushtra knew of the complete eschatology. In any case the Gatha text is familiar with the idea of a glowing metal, a fire which is to decide between the good and evil and, perhaps, also to reveal the difference.

But Zarathushtra is not concerned only with the fate of individuals. He has conceived something which is unknown to India; he exhibits what might be termed later a conception of history and of teleology. Mankind and existence have a goal—a new and unheard of idea. Zarathushtra was the first to create a doctrine of the fulfilment of history.

The Gathas know the bridge of the decider, or divider:

¹ Yasna 31. 2, 3.

² Yasna 47. 6. Cf. Söderblom, *La Vie Future*.

Separator, Cinvant, where the soul of the wicked men suffer (Yasna 51. 13). In the later Avesta it is narrow as a knife-edge for the evil, so that they fall down into the abyss, but broad and convenient for the good who pass over into paradise. In the kingdom, Dominion, in Mazdah's Dominion, Khshathra (34. 10), the beverage of health and the food of immortality, Ameretat, *Ambrosia*, serves to nourish the understanding (34. 11). According to their desire for paradise, 'the best of all things', they shall obtain paradise by the Holiest Spirit, the gifts of the Good Spirit in all times and 'the joy of enduring life' (43. 2). The long continuance of the blessed life appertains to Mazdah's Dominion which Zarathushtra longs for and covets (43. 13). Zarathushtra knows, or the poets who have given us the Gathas know, not only the name of paradise as 'the best', *Vahishta* (afterwards a proper name, *Behisht*), but also the name of the heaven of the blessed, *Garodemana*, 'the House of Song' (45. 8). The House of Song is the dwelling of Mazdah Ahura (51. 15) to which Zarathushtra refers his friends. 'May we offer him homage in the House of Song!' (45. 8). Paradise is also called the 'dwelling of Good Thought' (32. 15). Zarathushtra speaks of the one who deserves the coming life and promises him even here two pregnant cows as a reward (46. 19).

Torment and long tribulation or blessing is the choice (30. 11, 34. 4). Through the quaint and finely composed expressions of the Gatha poetry gleam features which make us suspect that Zarathushtra and his followers, when the Gatha poetry appeared, had already some knowledge of the myths and doctrines which occur in the later literature of the Mazdah religion. Thus Yasna 53. 7 seems to indicate that the spirit of the Drug faction will be annihilated at the end of the world. The concrete character of the hell of the Drug faction with the Evil Spirit and the Daevas is unmistakable. The infidel appertains to the place of corruption or decay (53. 9). Horrible food awaits those who choose Drug instead of paradise (Yasna 53. 6). The scene which occurs in later literature is hinted at in Yasna 49. 11. Already deceased myrmidons of Drug greet with loathsome food those who have been badly led, whose words and deeds have

been bad, whose whole spiritual religion, nature, *Daena*, has been bad (49. 11). In Yasna 31. 20, darkness and groaning are added to the wretched food of hell. Bartholomae translates: 'For those who join the adherents of Asha the long misery, the darkness, the wretched food and the cry of woe will be far away.' The groans of the lost are perhaps hinted at in Yasna 53. 6.

Here we are confronted by a dualism of prophetic nature quite different from that which asserts itself when natural and cultural religion become bankrupt, and man, deceived by all earthly things, seeks refuge in a spiritual world. Then arises in India, Greece, and elsewhere, a metaphysical opposition between spirit and matter, between the spiritual and the corporal. This opposition came also to Iran, and there, at a later date, issued in a doctrine of salvation which seeks deliverance in suppressing the corporal and in flight from earthly things to the spirit, because all evil is derived from matter itself. Zarathushtra also, in the Gathas, is aware of the difference between the two worlds, the physical world and the spiritual world (Yasna 28. 2). There the prophet prays to Mazdah and the Good Spirit for glory and honour in both worlds, and he expects fulfilment through Asha, through the Right. But this division, as such, has nothing to do with the difference between good and evil. Khshatra, the kingdom, Dominion, embraces the good of this world, cattle and land, home, power and success, as well as eternal bliss in the dwellings of Mazdah. The twin genii, Haurvatat and Ameretat, denote success, prosperity, health, possessions in this world and continued immortality after death. In the completed Avesta religion it is expressly stated that when the spirits, the souls, obtained bodily shape, they were asked what they wanted and chose to obtain bodies just in order to be able to oppose the evil. Thus it was by no means a fall due to sin. The body is regarded here, as in the prophetic religion of the Old Testament, as a gift of God, a good work of the Creator. We may ask ourselves whether Zarathushtra proclaimed this doctrine of the physical and spiritual creation. For in Yasna 31. 11, there is mention of *Daena*, the spiritual shape of man, and

it is obscurely suggested that the Lord provided the life with a body. The text of the Gathas is corrupt and, consequently, we cannot in every single stanza or line with full certainty determine what is meant unless the same doctrine is repeated and explained elsewhere. We are tempted to see in the Gathas the fundamental outlines of the theology of the later Avesta, possibly also the doctrine that the spiritual creation came first and then the physical creation, both being the work of the Lord for the fight against evil. Gatha piety does not yet know the Evil One as the creator of the evil half of existence. In the versified preaching of Zarathushtra, however, we are already able to trace that quadruple division characteristic of the Avesta religion. The spiritual world, as well as the physical, is divided between the friends and fellow soldiers of the All-wise Lord, the Right, the Truth, and the adherents of the Lie, the Evil, the Worst Spirit. The opposition in the spiritual world has its counterpart in mankind.

This dualism has never been developed in India, the antithesis between good and evil, right and wrong. We find an embodiment of moral evil, a real devil, the Lie; a rare and remarkable phenomenon in the history of religion.

And as the antithesis is prolonged backwards behind all time, so it is also prolonged forwards, over all time; (1) leading the individual souls to heaven, 'the House of Song', also called 'the Best Existence'—or to hell, 'the Worst Existence', according to their deeds—or to the third place between paradise and hell, *Hamistakan*, which is perhaps hinted at in the Gathas for those whose good and bad actions are equal; and (2) leading the whole creation to a blissful consummation.

There is no doubt about the end. The Prophet rejoices in the thought of Ahura's final victory and in the dreadful fate of the men of the Lie.

Here retribution dominates—just as in the Gospel. The full-grown eschatology of the Avesta regards even hell as a purgatory. The worst evil-doers will be annihilated; the others as well as hell itself will be purified by the molten metal. And hell will be added to the new earth.

VII

Questions with or without answers appertain to the form of the prophet's divine intercourse and instruction. In order to become a 'knower', 'aware', 'initiated', *Vaedemna* (48. 3), *Vidvā* (48. 2), the prophet beseeches Ahura who is himself the 'knower' beyond all others to tell him when the pious will overcome the man of Lie. One entire Gatha chapter (Yasna 44) has the form of a catechism where every stanza except the last begins: 'This I ask thee, tell me truly, Ahura.' A similar formula is found in 31. 14: 'Of these things I ask thee, Ahura, how they will happen and come to pass' for the pious and for the evil man.

In the catechism hymn (Yasna 44) it is interesting to see what the prophet desires to know of the Lord, his friend (44. 1). How will the 'Best World', 'Best Existence', i.e. paradise and eternal bliss, commence for him who gains it (44. 2)? Who is by creation the Father of the Right (Asha)? Who determines the path of the sun and stars? The waxing and waning of the moon? Who fixed the earth below and the heavens above so that they do not fall? Who created water and plants? Who yoked swiftness to winds and clouds? What artist created light and darkness, sleep and waking, morning, noon, night (44. 3-5)? In Stanza 6 the heart of the matter leaps forward: 'For whom hast thou created the pregnant, luck-bringing cow?'

The questions concern spiritual things also. Who created together with Dominion, Khshathra, Piety, Armaiti? Who made the son obedient to the father (44. 7)? Then there are questions on the consummation of the world and Daena, religion, the spiritual life, the best religion (44. 10), to proclaim which the prophet had been appointed at the outset (44. 11).

Further questions are asked about the opposition between the Lie and the Piety which may strike down the adherents of the Lie and work among them pain and destruction when the two raging hosts rush upon each other (44. 12-15). The prophet wishes to ally himself to the celestial beings so that his speech may have effect (44. 17). But he is not indifferent

to the reward of the priest: 'ten mares with the stallion and a camel' (44. 18). We are reminded of the hankering after cows in the Rigveda hymns. In Yasna 46. 19, Zarathushtra claims two pregnant cows and, moreover, he has merited the bliss of the Future Life. There is risk in refusing the priest-prophet what he asks for. Yasna 44. 19 sounds like a threat.

He knows the penalty which at last will be inflicted on him who withholds reward from one who has merited reward and in fulfilment of his promise performed his service. But he asks what will be his punishment even in this life? (44. 19). Those who give up the cattle to violence and cause them continually to moan (44. 20), such knights and priests who belong to the Daevas have never been good rulers.

VIII

Our reproduction of the essential contents of the Gatha texts gives us a living picture of the prophet, his surroundings and the opposition he had to meet. Where did he live? From antiquity the answers have been contradictory.

As we have seen, hints are given by the Gathas themselves. The prophet's social ideals are the management of the cattle and the care of the pastures. His heart has been seized with compassion for this peaceful, settled population, exposed to the exactions of the warrior caste without receiving any support from the priesthood, who, on the contrary, are foremost in that worship marked by sacrifices, intoxicants, and orgies, which the prophet opposes and which are regarded by him as worship of the Lie, and of devils, Daevas.

The entire Avesta has a lofty regard for labour and the calling of the worker on the land. In the Vendidad chapter which is called the Praise of Agriculture in the later Avesta, we read the praise of the husbandman and his husbandry over the wayward powers of Nature, 'he who cultivates corn, he cultivates piety'.

When the corn is prepared, the devils sweat.

When the mill is prepared, the devils despond.

When the meal is prepared, the devils howl.

When the dough is prepared, the devils are done for.¹

¹ Vendidad, Fargard 3.

The Marchioness of Ailsa gave me this civilized and christianized counterpart of that proud hymn of yeomanry:

At the back of the bread is the golden flour,
At the back of the flour is the mill.
At the back of the mill is the sheep and the shower,
And the sun, and the Father's will.

No wonder that people have discovered agriculture and Ackerbau in the Gathas. When I investigated more closely what the Gathas have to say about this, I found to my astonishment no trace of plough or tillage of the soil; neither sowing nor harvest, neither corn nor mill, neither meal nor baking of bread. Being so anxious to protect the third class, the settled country population, from the nobles and priests and, presumably, from rapacious nomads, he ought surely, besides his care for the cattle and pastures, to have had something to say about the ploughed field, the corn, and the bread which would have been an easy prey for the adversaries. Mention is made of destroying the pastures. What is intended by this I cannot imagine in detail. Had there been cornfields, the growing crop and the grain in the ears would have been more precarious and more exposed to reckless raids. The matter puzzled me until one summer I was staying in the Bernese Oberland. There was intense cultivation without tillage of the soil. The pastures were kept clean. They were manured by the grazing cattle but also, with great toil, by the men who carried up liquid manure and carefully tended and weeded them.

The words of the Gatha singer might there be applied literally. The occupation of the settled population is the care of the pastures and the management of the cattle. The difference is that the Swiss mountaineers have no lawless upper class to fear and no rapacious nomadic tribes to guard themselves against. My brother, whose work lies in northern Sweden, has told me of similar meadow culture in Lapland, carefully preserved and watered artificially for the sake of the grass and never opened up by the plough.

It is manifest that a similar kind of husbandry was practised in the homeland of the Zoroastrian hymns and of Zarathushtra. He lived in similar conditions, in a land-

scape with mountains. In spite of all the reasons in favour of western Persia, Aderbeidjan—recently very ably put together again by C. Clemen—I believe that we have to seek the prophet in the East, perhaps where is now Afghanistan.

I ask whether, indeed, Yasna 44. 20 does not reveal to us such a concrete detail as the artificial manuring of the pastures. The word *mizen* in the last line causes difficulty. Moulton¹ is attracted by my presentment of the case in *La Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 1909,² but finds a difficulty in the employment of the verb. The verb *maez* signifies to make water, to evacuate urine, and occurs in Vendidad in the Fargard which can be called the Praise of Agriculture. Among the happiest places on earth there is mentioned the place watered most by the small and great cattle. In accordance with this I have suggested a corresponding interpretation of the last line in the Question Gatha.³ Mills and Justi take the text as it stands, translating *mizen* literally, but paraphrasing it to mean rain. The great Geldner goes a step farther. Rain is often interpreted, as it is in the Avesta (Yasht 5. 120) mythologically, as urine from supernatural beings. He therefore takes from the first line of the five-lined stanza the word *Daeva* in plural and makes it the subject of the verb *mizen*. These divinities or spirits who were worshipped by the Karapan, Usij, and Kavi, branded in the same stanza, according to this interpretation, impudently forbear to grant needful rain to the pastures of the cattle. According to my translation the Karapan and Kavi just mentioned would be the subject of *mizen*. It would mean that they prevent the cattle from manuring the pastures in the manner desired. It ought, perhaps, to be said that the technical term for worker on the land—*fshuyant*—denotes literally 'one who brings fat'.

Spiegel and Darmesteter follow the native tradition which translates *mizen* by *mizd*, reward. As often happens, however, tradition has evidently forgotten what the original says.

¹ Moulton, op. cit., p. 370.

² Söderblom, *Note sur l'Agriculture dans l'Avesta*, p. 334 sq.

³ Yasna 44. 20; Söderblom, op. cit., p. 333.

Even if this detail be incorrectly interpreted, the economic conditions of the Gathas are plain enough. We are here far from the plains of Media and Western Iran, which even in the prophet's time had certainly for centuries or millenniums been tilled by the plough.

Native tradition connects the prophet with Airyana Vaējah, afterwards Iran Vej, the Aryan country, which is mentioned first in the geography of the Vendidad and is watered by Vanuhi Daitya, the good Daitya river. By tradition and science generally it is placed in the west, in the present Aderbeidjan, which became one of the chief countries of the later Zoroastrian religion. But there are also, as A. V. W. Jackson points out in his learned and complete survey, passages in our sources which connect Zarathushtra with eastern Iran.¹ The prophet never forgot the night when he stood in snow and cold outside an inhospitable house and was not admitted, though his horses were shivering with cold (Yasna 51. 12). The later Avesta knows much of cold and snow and ice. It has indeed preserved a saga telling that the world will be destroyed by a hard winter. Hard winters occur in the west in the mountains of Aderbeidjan as also in the east of Afghanistan. The 'good river', Vanuhi, afterwards Veh, has also been a name of the Oxus in the east, and the name of the sacred mountain Hara Berezaiti which is connected with the prophet's history and afterwards became Elburz, has evidently also belonged to a mountain chain in northern Afghanistan, called by the Greeks Parapanisos, a name formed from the word *Par-uparaesana*, which is found in the Avesta and also in the Darius inscription in Behishtun. According to Bundahish this Aparzin is the greatest mountain after Elburz. In the divine hymn devoted to Mithra (Yasht 10. 13-14) it is said that he, the sun-god, first of all the celestial gods, passes over Hara, conquering the beautiful heights and afterwards, in majesty, looking down upon the entire Aryan country. Consequently, this mountain must be in the east and the Aryan country must mean the regions lying immediately to the west. The mountain runs round the earth and souls travel over it (Vendidad 19. 30). Pre-

¹ Jackson, *Zoroaster*. pp. 205-25.

sumably the Parapanisos of the ancients also embraces Elburz. Strabo includes Bactria in Iran.¹

The language also points to the east. The chief language of the Achaemenian inscriptions is ancient Persian which, broadly speaking, superseded the other languages and dialects of Iran and with a strong Semitic admixture, developed into Middle Persian, Pehlvi, in which language the later Mazdah literature is composed. Written evidence is preserved showing that Pehlvi was used in the third and fourth centuries B.C. The second main Iranian language was the language of the Avesta which, as we have said, displays older as well as younger forms. The Gatha dialect, employed in the metrical texts which we have here analysed, occupies a unique position. The present Iranian dialects mostly go back to ancient Persian, not to the Avesta language. This shows that the Avesta dialect, which was the sacred language, because it was spoken by the men of the Zoroastrian prophetic religion, cannot have been widely spread. According to Huart and Browne, however, the Avesta language still lives in dialects spoken by Zoroastrians in Yezd, Kirman, and elsewhere.

When ancient Persian and the Avesta language are compared, their kinship is manifest. It is noteworthy, however, that among present-day Iranian dialects Afghan is the one which most clearly reveals kinship with the Avesta language.

Furthermore, there is the close kinship of the Gatha texts with the oldest documents of the Veda religion with regard to language as well as metre. Nearest to the language of the Veda hymns, however, stands the Gatha of seven chapters, Gatha Heptanghaiti, a prose poem somewhat later than the Gathas proper. For there we find Zarathushtra already an object of worship. Greater similarity to the Veda songs, in respect to metre, is found in Yashta, the divine hymns of the later Avesta, than in the Gathas.² Presumably Zarathushtra and Vishtashpa are to be sought in the mountainous regions of eastern Iran. Jackson has endeavoured to reconcile the opposing statements. He makes Zarathushtra to be born in the west and go to Bactria to exercise his prophetic

¹ Moulton, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 120.

vocation. For the Gatha of Misfortune begins: 'To what land shall I flee?' The supposition that Zarathushtra took with him to the eastern regions the higher culture of the west, particularly of Media, breaks down before the incontrovertible fact that Zarathushtra did not introduce tillage of the soil. Neither in the Gatha of Misfortune nor elsewhere in the Gatha texts is there a hint of the prophet leaving his homeland.

In his tract cows comprised the valuable property which he desired to protect. We hear of horses. The names of Vishtashpa and Jamaspa are formed from *aspa*, horse. In the suitable reward of a priest, Zarathushtra includes besides mares and a stallion also a camel. Could camels thrive and be of use in an inhospitable mountainous region with snowy winters?

IX

The date of Zarathushtra is equally disputed. Greek statements give him a fantastic antiquity. These statements may be partly accounted for by misunderstanding of the picture of the world presented in the Avesta. Native tradition has, broadly speaking, insisted on a date nearly three centuries before the death of Alexander, i.e. the seventh century B.C. Zarathushtra would then have lived about 600 B.C. There are good reasons for dating Zarathushtra's work earlier. His birth and work can scarcely be conceived later than the seventh century B.C.

X

The Gathas are among the most peculiar documents in the history of religion. In principle, they alone are to be compared with the creations of Mosaic prophetism, although the Gathas move within a more limited spiritual and moral sphere.

This literature consists of seventeen parts which form the framework of *Yasna*, the ritual of the unbloody sacrificial service of the Avesta. The metre has a certain similarity to the Vedic except that accent answers to quantity. The stanzas are put together according to the metre, in five so-called Gathas or hymn groups. In the complete Avesta,

in the time of the Sassanids, large parts of which are lost, they were found in the first Nask, the book, under the name *Staota-Yesnya*.

They are known as: (1) *Gatha Ahunavaiti*, corresponding to our Yasna chapters 28-34. The stanza has three lines, each line seven plus nine or seven plus eight syllables with intervening caesura. The same metre is found in the chief prayer, *Ahuna Vairya Honover*.

Then follows the Seven-chapter *Gatha*, *Gatha Haptanghaiti*, Yasna 35-41, which is later in form and content. Chapter 42 contains a series of invocations.

(2) *Gatha Ushtavaiti*, Yasna 43-6, has five-lined stanzas with four plus seven syllables in every line.

(3) *Gatha Spenta Mainyu*, Yasna 47-50, also four chapters or hymns, has four-lined stanzas and four plus seven, in one instance five plus seven, syllables in the line.

(4) *Gatha Vohu Khshathra*, Yasna 51, has three-lined stanzas with seven plus seven syllables in the line. Chapter 52 contains a formula of benediction in prose.

(5) *Gatha Vahishtoishti*, Yasna 53, has four-lined stanzas, two shorter ones with seven plus five syllables in the line and a caesura and two longer ones with seven plus seven plus five syllables in the line and two caesuras.

To the latter is added, Yasna 54, the prayer *Airyama Ishyo*. The chief remaining prayers or formulas are *Ashemvohu* in prose and *Yenhe Hatan*, three lines of eleven syllables each.

Subjoining the two introductory chapters still extant, Yasna 14 and 15 with the invocation, Yasna 56, and furthermore Yasna 58. 1-3, on the value and power of prayer, we obtain, as Geldner has shown, the thirty-three chapters in the first Nask of the Sassanids.

The Gathas are named after the initial words of the hymns. They are worshipped and invoked in the later Avesta as divine beings.

XI

The time was a remarkable one. Great things occurred in the world of the Spirit during those centuries. Kon-fu-tse summarized the wisdom of China in reverence towards

Heaven and antiquity. His older contemporary Lao-tse showed the way to quiet goodness and peace of mind. On the banks of the Neranjara there rose up in the soul of Siddhartha the way of deliverance from the woe of existence and the attainment of Nirvana. Before him Vardhamana had sought to 'overcome' by means of a severe ascetic life. From other mysterious sources came salvation by Bhakti, devotion to a personal divinity. Among the Jews appeared the great prophets and their writings. The gloomy solitary at Ephesus, Heraclitus, expounded his doctrine. In southern Italy Pythagoras gathered an intimate band of hearers to hear his speculations and his ascetic ideals. There also the bold rhapsodist, Xenophanes, spent the greater part of his life. In Sicily the seer Empedocles proclaimed his own divinity; he was himself a god.

Such was the epoch which first listened to the social zeal and hymns of praise of Zarathushtra. Was it an accident? Analogies do in history not unfrequently occur unrelated to one another. On the other hand historical connexions have even in grey antiquity existed to a far greater extent than science has yet begun to see and acknowledge. But neither explanation suffices when we see how the yearning for salvation and the sense of God's nearness break forth at certain epochs simultaneously with over-mastering power and with effects that are felt centuries and millenniums later. As a second example we might adduce the century of Saint Francis of Assisi, the great Thomas, the Gothic cathedrals, Dante, Master Eckhart, and German mysticism, while contemporaneously there was the golden age of Sufist mystical poetry and in India, somewhat earlier, Ramanuja, the preacher of the love of God and the righteousness of faith. In Japan there were Shinran, the unwearied preacher of the blessed power of the sacred vow and the mercy of the Amida-god, and Nichiren, the most powerful religious personality of the Japanese nation, its stern preacher of repentance and admonisher.

Can the impression that forces itself upon the beholder be restrained, the more deeply he enters into these matters? No one may prescribe laws and ways to the Eternal Spirit. What concerns us is carefully to observe and avail ourselves

of that which the history of the race affords. The distribution among periods and nations must seem arbitrary to human understanding. After studying the men of religion and its vicissitudes, the endeavours of the human spirit and its witness to the visitations and inevitable demands of the divinity, there flashes forth, now and then, as it were, a gleam from the world beyond. Religion is concerned with an 'I', but also with a 'Thou'. It is as if the Eternal at certain periods visited the race more actively and perceptibly than at others. From secret sources there well up clearness and certainty. They may have a mainly negative direction, away from the corruption of the world and the prison of sin and impurity. In Israel and the mountains of Bactria, notwithstanding the characteristic difference which confined Ahura to the races of Iran but made the jealous Yahveh of the prophets the Father of Jesus Christ and the God of humanity, the witness agrees in this important respect —that the nearness and power and the positive commissions of God compel attention in the first place; the world is overcome and man is called to be the co-worker with God. To speak foolishly: The prophet is a manifestation of God's activity.

VII
SOCRATES
THE RELIGION OF GOOD CONSCIENCE

PLOTINUS, his disciple Porphyry tells us, looked forward after his release from the body to meeting his spiritual kindred beyond the grave.¹ Among these immortals Pythagoras and Plato are named, but not Socrates. This is an indication where the great mystic felt his kinship to lie. At the same time it bears testimony to the difference between the teaching of Socrates and the teaching of Plato, however much Plato might make Socrates the spokesman of his words. We see from the *Apology* of Socrates that the hope of continuing his discourses with the sages of old in a future existence was not alien to him. And amongst such sages he must surely hold a foremost place.

At the time when it was the fashion to compare Socrates with Christ, Le Vicaire Savoyard found such a comparison erroneous and impossible. After giving various good reasons Rousseau ends with a rhetorical but not very happy phrase: Socrates died like a man, Christ like a God.

Oberlin, the rector of the poverty-stricken parish of Banded-la-Roche in Alsace and a younger contemporary of Rousseau, was called by the Prefêt Lezay-Marnezia an 'homme presque divin' and is counted by Hase among the saints of Protestantism. Oberlin said: 'Socrate sera assis à la droite de Dieu.'

Socrates has been the object of infinite study and admiration. Is he yet outworn?

I. *The Place of Socrates in Ethics, Philosophy, and Religion*

First and last, Socrates has been represented as a pattern of virtue. To play that part for millenniums is a superhuman feat and has dangers of its own. The virtuous sometimes become tedious.

Socrates was above all the sage. It would take long to recount the many methods that have been employed to

¹ Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 25.

bring out what was essential in his personality and work. As the Indian poet says of Rama, everybody has seen in Socrates what he most liked himself. Is not the same true of pictures of Christ? Hence the divergent views of the work of Socrates. These go back to his contemporaries and immediate successors. During his lifetime Socrates was described and estimated by two great men, Aristophanes and Plato, as well as by one lesser man, Xenophon. To them must be added a great successor, Aristotle. They all saw him through very different spectacles.

It was no easy matter to portray the essence of a personality like that of Socrates. Both Plato and Xenophon bear involuntary witness to the difficulty. Aristotle (born at Stagira in 384, died 322 B.C.) never saw Socrates, but was aided by the perspective of distance in estimating his work. Aristotle leaves us in no uncertainty about the achievements of Socrates in philosophy. Socrates is frequently quoted by him in such a manner as to show that Aristotle made use of Plato, not Xenophon.¹ But Aristotle had access to more exact knowledge. More than once he puts the view of Plato in opposition to that of Socrates.

Aristotle acknowledges the originality of Socrates in two matters. He was the first to abandon physics for ethics and to lay the foundation of a scientific system of ethics. And in philosophy or logic Socrates, according to Aristotle, began the forming of concepts. Prior to Socrates, dialectics had not the power of forming concepts. 'Two things ought rightly to be imputed to Socrates, viz. induction (*οἱ ἐπακτικοὶ λόγοι*) and the general determinations of concepts (*τὸ ὁρίζεσθαι*).'²

While, however, Aristotle with certainty and exactitude allotted to Socrates his place of honour in the history of thought, there is not a word in Aristotle about what is equally remarkable, viz. his place in the history of religion.

Hegel approved of Aristotle's criticism of Socrates. And his own view was the object of an acute criticism by Kierkegaard.³ But neither of these three eminent men has

¹ Joel, *Der Xenophontische und der echte Sokrates*, i, p. 205.

² Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, xiii. 4. 1078.

³ Kierkegaard, *Om begrebet Ironi*, pp. 298 sqq.

touched the kernel, viz. that the basic element of Socrates' life and work was not examination and criticism but a firm and unswerving faith.

And the inner nature of this faith was not merely a belief in reason. Socrates desired to raise the life and work of men, their conceptions, and activities, from the gloom of ignorance up to the bright daylight of self-searching and of comprehension and yet he based his own life and work not upon a deduction, a calculation, or an idea, but upon something secret which did not admit of analysis and explanation by the reason; upon a mystical experience, an irrational or super-rational apprehension which carried with it an inward compulsion, an unconditional obligation. That which drove him on was what might be called the mystery of his soul.

It is natural that students of Socrates should devote their attention to his *Δαιμόνιον*. The matter was too extraordinary to be overlooked. Occasionally his trust in God has also been observed. But these matters have been regarded as peculiar and subsidiary circumstances, subordinate to his real significance. *Δαιμόνιον* has usually received a wrong interpretation. The religious trust of Socrates and what was connected with it have not been put in the centre.

Socrates belongs to religion as much as to morality and philosophy. He knew himself to be of those whose 'business the gods are concerned with'.¹

Socrates fulfilled the obligations of his ancestral religion. He was neither new-fangled nor revolutionary. He was not at all notable for his *practice* of religion, sacrifices, ritual, and the like. But he was great in his *possession* of religion. The divinity itself had supernaturally communed with him. He lived in an assurance, communicated by God, and was far from making it the object of the critical inquiry which he elsewhere recommends. He was the object of a divine revelation and, in some measure, stands forth in the history of religion as a revealer. The Divine displays in him an activity to which there are elsewhere few parallels.

The secret of Socrates lies in the profundity of an incommensurable experience and immediate certitude, not in

¹ Plato, *Apology*, 41 D.

any kind of reflection, sure though Socrates was that 'an unexamined life is not a life worth living'.¹ Furthermore, this secret of his soul and life was manifest in the certainty that the power experienced by him, the friendly guidance or providence, was the central power of life in which his unconditional confidence is placed.

II. *The Daimonion of Socrates*

We have to observe Socrates' comparison of his Daimonion with divination—an important piece of information. In both cases we are concerned with divine things incomprehensible to man. Xenophon evidently had no clear comprehension of what the Daimonion was. The willingness of Ast² and others to be guided by Xenophon is due to their imperative wish to see in all phenomena, consequently also in the Daimonion of Socrates, a universal human function; they have no room in their brains for the extraordinary.

Daimonion was unconditionally accepted by Socrates as something divine. The very name implies something daemonic, supernatural. Daimonion is frequently also called 'something divine', θεῖόν τι. Θεῖον, 'divine', is evidently almost synonymous with Δαιμόνιον.

Elsewhere in the *Apology* the voice or sign is called 'prophecy' or the sign of prophecy—from the daimonion, 'the supernatural'. ἡ εἰωθυῖά μοι μαντική ἢ τοῦ δαιμονίου, 'the usual prophetic sign from the daimon on my behalf'.³ With *mantike* should probably be supplied τέχνη, meaning the 'art of prophecy' rather than φωνή—'the voice of prophecy'. Elsewhere, also, the warnings of the Daimonion are considered by Socrates as falling under the head of divination. Quite unhesitatingly he regards the mysterious inward voice, which to him was common and natural, as a divine instruction. Although at first in childhood it astonished him, it became during the course of his life as intimate a form of divine intercourse as other more usual forms are for one who prays. In

¹ Ibid. 38 A.

² Ast, *Platon's Leben und Schriften*; cf. Kierkegaard, op. cit., p. 244.

³ Plato, *Apology*, 40 A.

a passage of the *Apology* there is also another synonym for Daimonion—‘the sign of God’, ‘the sign of the Divinity’ (τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σημεῖον).¹ However this phenomenon may be explained, it must be remembered that to the prosaic and shrewd man, who has for ages stood as the incarnation of reason and searching common sense, it conveyed a divine admonition which it never for a moment occurred to him to question, investigate, or disobey.

When the voice came, it conveyed instructions, as it were, from another world. Socrates was unable beforehand to calculate whether or when it would come. It did not manifest itself as the result of deliberation. He went about in a quietly listening attitude, ready at any time in the midst of his occupations which were always the same, in the exercise of his vocation and in the situations into which it led him, to hear a ‘Nay’ and unhesitatingly to obey it. It is perfectly plain that Socrates himself took no steps to perceive the voice. There was no rehearsal or preparatory exercise, no seeking, no training, no mystical apparatus such as appertains to the usual circumstances of religion when extraordinary emotions and experiences are desired. Orphism and other forms of mysticism, either primitive or more highly developed and purified, were acquainted with tried methods of experiencing the divinity. But to Socrates the Daimonion was something that fell upon him when exercising his vocation, not something attainable by a methodic schooling and training of the mind.

The warnings of the Daimonion were verified. That does not mean that Socrates at once perceived a reasonable cause for the interference of the Daimonion. Thus, with regard to his not taking part in politics² it was not until later that Socrates discovered that it was fortunate and well that he had abstained from politics according to the warnings of that divine voice or sign.

In the lawcourt, therefore, Socrates is clear and sure that no danger was lurking. Not having been warned, he knows that no evil could befall him: such is the childlike confidence he has in the steadfast and unerring guidance of the divinity

¹ Plato, *Apology*, 40 B.

² Ibid. 31 D.

in all the affairs of life. Not even death, if that be now his lot, could be an evil. For then God would have warned him. When did a man, and to give point to the question we can say, when did a man who was a professional investigator and critic, live in more complete resignation and trust in God? This confidence was based on something else and more than the Daimonion. But the absence of the divine warning was a weighty proof to Socrates that he had the protection of the divinity.

The sign often had reference to mere trifles. There was no question of conscience, of right or wrong.

The common translation by 'conscience' is one of the unsuccessful attempts to make the Daimonion of Socrates the common property of mankind. *Ἀγαθόν* and *κακόν*, good and evil, have here the significance of fortune and misfortune. Socrates says: 'when I was going to do something not right', *μὴ ὀρθῶς*.¹ It by no means signifies something wrong, not quite conscientious, at variance with the claims of morality; rather it signifies something not in my line, something which might have serious consequences for me. Whether he ought to go into the lawcourt or not, does not, strictly speaking, imply any moral choice. The Daimonion or, more properly here the absence of the sign, makes him certain that his undertaking will succeed. The Daimonion is, as it were, an apprehension, the reason for which he cannot understand, but which, experience teaches him, he will be wrong not to follow. The Daimonion is a guide, a friend who warns him of danger, not a vigilant judge. Thence his assurance. When there was a menace which ought to be avoided or could be avoided, the Daimonion informed him.

Nevertheless, the Daimonion is closely connected with the moral life. Socrates' assurance that he was the object of divine care is intimately connected with his uprightness and submission to the good. Socrates' trust in God rested, as we shall see, on other and surer foundations than the sign. It was, however, confirmed thereby. Assurance is always intimately connected with conscience and morality. A condition of the assurance was the submission of the life

¹ Ibid. 40 A.

to the moral insight. And yet this was not the ground of the assurance. There was a deeper cause, viz. the certainty of being under God's protection. Socrates the moralist did not build his assurance on his own goodness but on the divine steadfastness.

Socrates had indeed an auditory perception unknown to other people. The peculiar phenomenon was a reality, not a way of speaking, not a literary fiction of the kind known to us from the incomparable style of Plato. The attempt has been made to deliver Socrates from an embarrassing and, for a wise man and pattern of virtue, unworthy eccentricity by explaining the Daimonion as a figure of speech. Socrates had a fine sense of hearing. According to *Crito* he heard the voices of the laws: 'Just as the corybantes fancy they hear the flutes, so also there sounds within me the tone of these words and prevents me from listening to others.'¹ We cannot decide whether the sense of sanctity of the laws was to the peculiar psychological and physiological organism of Socrates intensified to the point of the attainment of something like an auditory perception. It is more likely that we in the quotation from *Crito* have to do with a manner of speech common to all languages through the entire history of literature. But the Daimonion cannot be so explained. The Daimonion is a real psychological phenomenon. You may call it a pure, delicate apprehension or a feeling or a fine instinct for what his personality might or might not engage in; you may call the Daimonion a kind of premonition or preconceived opinion; it is certain that it was an actual object of perception to Socrates.

There are passages in Xenophon and in Plato² where Daimonion is employed in the literary manner as a symbolical expression for the inner conviction. But we have no right to rationalize and generalize from these examples, as Joel does.³

Moreover, Socrates, Plato, and Xenophon ought to be allowed to plead their own causes. Even in the *Apology* it is

¹ Plato, *Crito*, 54 D.

² Xenophon, *Symposium*, viii. 5; Plato, *Euthydemus*, 272; *Phaedrus*, 242 B.

³ Joel, op. cit., i, p. 74.

clear that Socrates deems this Daimonion to be something in itself peculiar. Otherwise, why should he explain the phenomenon to the Athenians? If the Daimonion were something common to all mankind, Socrates might simply have appealed to the similar experience of his hearers and this would have been quite in keeping with his methods. He did not do so, however. The main passage is the conversation with Adimantus in the *Republic*. There Socrates declares unmistakably that no one before him had had the sign of the Daimonion.¹

Room must be made for the extraordinary. The clue to the Daimonion of Socrates is the perception that here we have to do with a singular concrete phenomenon the explanation of which is to be sought in Socrates himself and not in others.

Xenophon bears similar witness. The Daimonion is considered by him to be akin to the art of divination. But he admits the uniqueness of Socrates' position. When we ourselves cannot know, the gods make clear the outcome by the art of prophecy, thus aiding men. Euthydemus adds: 'but with thee the gods seem to converse yet more kindly than with others, since unasked they give thee beforehand hints as to what should be done and what should not be done.'²

The Athenians regarded Socrates' Daimonion as a new divinity. The charge correctly stated the simple opinion of the Athenians. This is related in the dialogue *Euthyphro*. Socrates mentions there to Euthyphro: People assert 'that I create gods, and when I create new gods, that I do not believe in the old ones'. Then Euthyphro remarks: 'I understand, Socrates, it is because you say that the Daimonion is bestowed upon you every time.'³

Some value Socrates highly and regard the Daimonion accordingly. In all ages it has been usual to let the Daimonion signify the conscience. But, owing to the difficulties connected with this interpretation, it has been sought to regard the matter in another way. Socrates was a wise man, able

¹ Plato, *Republic*, 496 c.

² Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, iv. 3. 12; cf. iv. 8. 1; i. 1. 4.

³ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 3 B.

in anticipation to calculate the consequences of an action. And Daimonion was merely the odd name of this acute prevision of his. We need not point out that this interpretation is as incompatible with the texts as that of conscience.

Or Socrates is less highly valued. 'Socrates was mad.' By the early Church Fathers, or at any rate by some of them, the Daimonion of Socrates was interpreted as an evil spirit. To have a daimonion may signify to be mad, and was used in this sense of Jesus in St. John's Gospel, x. 21. Other early Fathers saw in the Daimonion of Socrates an angel, a heavenly being.

'Socrates suffered from auditory hallucinations and other weaknesses', it is said to-day. I fancy there are many who would gladly accept this abnormal auditory perception if, in so doing, they might obtain a hundredth part of the assurance and consistency, the 'firmness and quickness of decision'¹ displayed by Socrates, the investigator.

Socrates is certainly no hysteric; rather may he be regarded as a personification of robust bodily and spiritual health. On comparing ourselves with him, it will probably be found that spiritual health is on his side rather than on that of ordinary men. Frederic W. H. Myers, the Cambridge psychologist, too early removed by death, writes about something 'which is so far from madness that it is wiser than our sanity itself'. He compares Socrates with the Maid of Orleans and declares that 'we have no right to class Joan's monitions, any more than those of Socrates, as incipient madness. . . . To be sane, after all, is to be adjusted to our environment, to be capable of coping with the facts around us. Tried by this test, it is Socrates and Joan who should be our types of sanity.'²

I am not sure whether the comparison with the Maid of Orleans, made by Victor Egger³ and by Frederic Myers, is enlightening. In the lives of both these historical personalities inner voices played indeed an important part. But Joan of Arc was led by the voice to a superhumanly bold achievement. With Socrates there was nothing like that.

¹ Plutarch, *De Genio Socratis*, xi; *Moralia*, iii. 581.

² Myers, *The Daemon of Socrates*, p. 544.

³ Egger, *La Parole Intérieure*.

The Daimonion had nothing to do with his peculiar vocation as investigator. No doubt, that too was given him by God, but certainly not through 'the usual sign', 'the divine voice'. Socrates never refers to his Daimonion in any concern of the vocation laid upon him by the divinity as investigator and teacher.¹ The Daimonion assisted him in certain individual, often insignificant cases, to set bounds to his vocation, but it had not given him the vocation.

Analogies, and much closer analogies, can be found to the experience of Socrates. It is not so much the form, an auditory perception, that claims our attention as the matter, that is, the alert obedience of the personality and its quick instinct for what appertains to its vocation and what is fitted for it.

After a lecture I had given on Socrates many years ago, one of my hearers came and told me of similar experiences. She had occasionally, but not often, heard a voice. It showed her in an unaccountable way what was going to happen and it proved itself true. She was led to avoid things which seemed perfectly indifferent and harmless, but which, in view of a situation occurring soon after, would have been disastrous. I found a closer analogy in an equally deep and sensitive soul who, I regret to say, died before there was an opportunity of making an accurate record of her experiences. The voice would come to her in the street where she was walking or in the room where she sat. To her it betokened warning and guidance and was regarded by her as a merciful act of Providence. In the dark depths of Socrates' being there was a feeling, fine and strong, beyond the range of reflection, which enlightened him even in small things as to what agreed with his vocation and appertained to his personality. In the unimportant happenings of everyday life it seems indifferent what we do, choice seems to be made at random, one takes too much, the other too little: after uncertain groping a mere chance may easily become decisive. In such cases, too, Socrates had unerring guidance from the Daimonion. But this vigilant herald of his personality also enlightened him in weighty and difficult cases

¹ Plato, *Apology*, 22. 33 c; *Theaetetus*, 150 c sq.

when loyalty to his mental powers and his allotted vocation were at stake, as e.g. in the avoidance of politics and on the occasion when he was not allowed to flee from the trial and its consequences. We cannot speak of a calculation or prevision of the consequences; at any rate, we should not then be doing justice to the matter in all its singularity. We should notice the comparison of the Daimonion with the art of divination in Xenophon and also in Plato. Socrates says:¹ 'I am a diviner.' According to Xenophon the Daimonion manifested itself in exactly those cases when the art of divination, according to Socrates, ought to be had recourse to, i.e. only when human insight and reflection are unavailing. This is striking. But what decided the choice was not the issue, but the admonition of the voice. Otherwise, the most important case, the silence of the Daimonion before the trial, would be inexplicable. Socrates' obedience to the sign does not signify any conscious or subconscious calculation of prudence, but his unconscious, instinctive, and intuitive loyalty to himself and his vocation. A sure instinct of this kind, a delicate tact, a sensitiveness of the personality for what does or does not appertain to its nature, an admonition, can find expression by visions or voices in other people as well as Socrates.

To other people, perchance, the activities of Socrates might seem a ridiculous or perilous pastime. To him they were a necessity. We have seen how the Daimonion helped him to gain assurance in devoting himself to his vocation. For the gaining of an acute feeling for what is favourable to the individual's complex vocation, with its many ties and duties, as well as to his personality, the Christian may have recourse to something which Socrates does not seem to have availed himself of to any great extent, viz. prayer.

It might be tempting to press a fuller meaning into the words of Xenophon respecting Socrates' prayer: 'He asked what was best for himself.'² Is this a hint of something appertaining to the inner life of Socrates and the secret of his clearness and concentration? Plato does not confirm that supposition. Prayers are put into the mouth of Socrates, but

¹ *Phaedrus*, 242 c.

² Xenophon, *Mem.* i. 3. 2.

he was not a man of prayer. None the less, the Daimonion signified for him intercourse with the divinity. It was the 'sign of God'.

III. *Socrates and the Gods of the State*

Did Socrates deny the gods of the State? The accusation declared that he did. Xenophon is eager to deny it. And he does so with reference to divination, an essential constituent of ancient religion.

'He introduced (no new gods, Daimonia) no other innovation than all those who believe in the art of divination and make use of the flight of birds and of words and of omens and sacrifices. For they do not suppose that the birds or people whom they meet know what is profitable for those who consult oracles, but they hold that the gods show it them by these means; and he thought so too. But most people say that they are both persuaded and dissuaded by the birds and by those they meet. But Socrates spoke as he was convinced. For he said that the Daimonion gave him instruction.'¹

Among the benefactions of the gods, according to Socrates, was the opportunity of ascertaining the outcome of an event, when human ability fails, by means of divination. 'But you', says Euthydemus to Socrates, 'are the object of especial benevolence; you are informed without inquiring.'² Thus directly is the Daimonion connected by Xenophon with divination.

This connexion is also indicated by Plato. In the *Apology*³ the daemonic sign is called 'divination', ἡ μαντική. In *Phaedrus*⁴ Socrates calls himself, in connexion with the activity of the Daimonion, a μάντις, a diviner, for his own needs. Apart from this, Xenophon refers to Socrates' interest in divination. It is folly, according to Socrates, to act against the instructions of the gods.⁵

Be it granted that Xenophon exaggerates. In the *Apology*, however, Socrates speaks of the oracle with the most striking appreciation, as having given to him his peculiar vocation. It may be doubted whether the entire work

¹ *Mem.* i. 1. 3 sq.

³ Plato, *Apology*, 40.

⁴ *Phaedrus*, 242 c.

² *Mem.* iv. 3. 12.

⁵ *Mem.* i. 3. 4.

of Socrates originated in this word of the oracle. It is noteworthy that when Socrates in his *Apology* refers to the will of the gods, he mentions or hints at other instances of divination than the oracular word brought from Delphi by Chaerepho:¹ 'This has been laid upon me by the god (God) through the oracle-word (*ἐκ μαντείων*) and dreams and in every way whereby a divine providence has ever enjoined upon a human being to do any kind of things.' Plato was not addicted to divination. All the less reason had he to ascribe to his master any high appreciation of divination, unless he had been compelled to do so by the plain words of Socrates. To understand the significance of divination for even the noblest spirits of Greece, we need only consult the tragedies—*Oedipus Coloneus* or *Antigone*.²

Socrates' general attitude to religion was not that of an opponent. He was loyal and had not come 'to destroy'. He himself fulfilled the claims of religion. Herein he can be compared with Christ. Socrates often sacrificed, both at home and on the public altars of the state.³ We remember the cock which, according to Phaedo, he wanted sacrificed to Asclepius.⁴ The ancestral cult was sacred to him. Perhaps the solicitude of the ageing Plato for the worship of the gods of the State, in his *Laws*, is a late expression of the influence of the piety of Socrates. But he does not seem to have gone beyond what was customary and ordained. When he speaks of cult and gods, it is not with the personal zeal and ardour of the pious Xenophon. Socrates was a rationalist, but he was penetrated by trust in God. He maintained an ethical view of the world. But he did not directly oppose cultural practices and myths.

In Xenophon⁵ we see how Socrates made prayer more personal and universal and restrained the excesses of sacrificial zeal. As Joel points out, this is at variance with Xenophon's own views in other writings, where the zeal of the sacrificer secures the pleasure of the gods. Whatever Xenophon says of Socrates that is in a certain sense contradictory to his own views, must be genuinely Socratic. The

¹ *Apology*, 33 C.

² Sophocles, *Oed. Col.* 387; *Antigone*, 1034.

³ *Mem.* i. 1. 2.

⁴ Phaedo, 118. Cf. *Euthydemus*, 302 B.

⁵ *Mem.* i. 3.

new personal human ideal of Socrates was hardly compatible with the *naïveté* of the antique cult. The ethical side has more scope than in current piety. The most beloved by the divinity, according to Socrates, are those who do well in their vocation, tillers of the soil in agriculture, physicians in the art of healing, politicians in politics.¹ This agrees with what Plato says of Socrates' view of his vocation being given to him by the divinity.

Criticism of the settled order in divine worship and the State did not appertain to the vocation of Socrates. Like Jesus and others, he had more important things to do than to criticize established forms and institutions. But it is manifest that Socrates believed in the moral order of the universe and, in doing so, toned down the occasional and capricious elements supposed to belong to the work of the divinity.

IV. *Socrates' Faith and Worship*

The Delphic oracle had become a decisive factor in the vocation of Socrates. When the expression *ὁ θεός* is employed in the *Apology*, it can several times be referred to the divinity who spoke through the Pythia at Delphi, namely Apollo. Such a rendering, however, is not possible everywhere. 'The god' occurs several times before the oracle is mentioned. It cannot be a literary fiction, when Plato makes Socrates speak of 'the God' in the definite form throughout the *Apology*. We may render it by 'God'. Socrates takes towards him in the *Apology* an attitude of obedience and trust. The plural form 'gods', however, does occur now and then.

Socrates confidently places his cause in the hands of the divinity. 'It may turn out as God wills, but I must obey the law and defend myself.'² The tone is not that of Plato. It is Socrates that speaks.

Socrates has immediate assurance of a moral order in the universe. He is not afraid of his prosecutor. For 'it is no part of the divine order (*οὐ θεμιτόν*) that a better man can be hurt by a worse'.³ He may, perchance, be killed or driven

¹ *Mem.* iii. 9. 14 sq.

² *Apology*, 19 A.

³ *Ibid.*, 30 D.

into exile. But it is a much worse calamity to seek a person's life unjustly. Moral evil is more perilous than death.

Strong and numerous are the expressions in the *Apology* of Socrates' whole-hearted trust in the divine power of the good. These words do not occur in a theological treatise, they were not written by an edifying writer in the lamplight of a cosy room, but they were said by a man who first awaited and then listened to his doom at the hands of that Athenian people to whom his life had been devoted. At the end of the speech there is a summary formulation of the assurance which in Socrates took away the fear of death and of all that men are wont to fear, as long as he was on the right way. This alone he desires to inculcate: 'For a good man there is no evil, whether he live or die, and the gods are concerned with the business of such a one.'¹ Our minds turn to the psalms of the Old Testament: 'I have walked in righteousness, wherefore should I fear?' In his case, however, we miss their glowing passion as well as their fear of death. It might be of interest to ask: how would a Jewish Psalmist have spoken in the position of Socrates? A double reaction immediately presents itself. In the face of death he would have lamented: 'Lord, workers of violence assault me, hasten to my deliverance. Naughty men persecute me. Deliver me from death. Save me from Sheol for the sake of thy power and righteousness.' Moreover, the psalmist would either pathetically declare his innocence or else declare that, as death is the worst calamity that can befall a man, it must proceed from the anger of God which must be propitiated. He would therefore beseech God's forgiveness for his misdoings and for his hidden shortcomings. And he would make a holy vow that when he was delivered from the peril, he would bring to the Lord the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

With Socrates there is nothing of this. He knows he is protected by the divinity. Therefore he is safe, whatever befall him. On what is his fortitude based? Let us beware of the erroneous view that Socrates was influenced by the law of recompense. His security and assurance that no evil would befall him are not regarded by him as the reward of good

¹ *Apology*, 41 D.

conduct. His line of thought is different. He does not claim deliverance from death and calamity because of his righteousness. To be sure, the divinity expects him to keep strictly to what is right and true. But his belief in the guidance of Providence is not grounded on a theory of reward and punishment. God has shown Socrates in another way that he enjoys steadfast divine guidance. He knows this by the usual sign and manifold experiences. Now comes what is peculiar to Socrates. Confident of the protection of the divinity he knows that whatever happens, must be for his good. Death being now about to strike him, it must, in this aspect, be a stroke of fortune and not a calamity.

Socrates did not for a moment stiffen into a tragic heroism or a stoical resignation in contemplating the tragedy of life. To him it was self-evident and a constant experience that he who lives a moral and godly life is happy. He founded the Religion of Good Conscience. At the end of the *Apology* he gives the maxim: 'For a good man there is no evil whether he live or die.'¹

For him there was no dualism of virtue and happiness. Aristotle himself has expressed the matter best in his poem to his dead friend Eudemus. Aristotle says that young Eudemus had built an altar to some one and worshipped him: this was not uncommon. Parmenides had dedicated a heroon to his Pythagorean teacher Amcinias.² But Aristotle's poem is remarkable. A few lines from this elegy on Eudemus have been preserved by Olympiodorus. What is there said has often been referred to Plato. But he was still living. It seems more correct to make the altar named in the poem and the admiration which it expresses relate to Socrates.

When he had set his foot on our Athenian soil,
Out of Earth's solemn bare lap he piously built up an altar
To his honour whose name none save the holy may praise,
His who alone or first of mortals pointed out clearly
Both by the life which he lived and by the truths he laid down,
How it is open to all to become both righteous and happy.
Ah me! there are none now who can grasp such a thing.³

¹ Ibid., 41 D.

² Gomperz, *Griechische Denker*, i, p. 136; ii, p. 57.

³ Olympiodorus, *In Gorg.* 186; cf. Gomperz, op. cit., ii, p. 539.

Socrates well knew that there was much unrighteousness in public affairs.¹ And when, in unshaken confidence in the moral order of the world, he maintains his calm in spite of the sentence and the cup of poison, it is not, as Xenophon² benevolently declares, because Socrates was now so old, that it was really an advantage for him to die. The *Apology* clearly shows the reason why Socrates did not look upon death as an evil: it appertained to his vocation and his duty. Socrates did not seek a future recompensation in a bliss beyond the grave. He leaves that question open. But he cannot see any dreadful possibilities in death. Since his punishment lay on the way which he was following in obedience to the divinity, he must conclude that death cannot be an evil.

Either it will be a delightful dreamless sleep, and whoever has had such a dreamless night of rest will find it easy to count the days and nights in which he was happier than on that night, even if he were the King of Persia himself.³ Others besides Hamlet have had this experience. In the Brihad-Aranyaka-Upanishad⁴ King Ajatasatru speaks of the deep sleep without consciousness, in which a child or a great king or a great brahman attains the highest measure of bliss. Yajnavalkya praises the bliss of dreamless sleep:

In Chandogya Upanishad we read:

'As a falcon, or an eagle, having flown around here in space, becomes weary, folds its wings, and is borne down to its nest, just so this person hastens to that state, where, asleep, he desires no desires and dreams no dream.'⁵

'When a man is asleep, reposing, and at perfect rest, so that he sees no dream, then he has entered into those arteries (of the heart), then no evil touches him, for he has obtained the light (of the sun).'⁶

And Lord Byron writes about being

Glad for a while to heave unconscious breath
Yet wake to wrestle with the dread of Death,
And shun, though day but dawn on ills increased,
That sleep, the loveliest, since it dreams the least.⁷

Or Socrates will come to Hades, to righteous judges, and

¹ *Apology*, 31 E.

² Xenophon, *Mem.* iv. 8. 8.

³ *Apology*, 40 D.

⁴ Brihad-Aranyaka-Upanishad, ii. 1. 19.

⁵ Ibid. iv. 3. 19; cf. iv. 3. 9; Oldenberg, *Lehre der Upanishaden*, pp. 141, 232, 250.

⁶ Chandogya Upanishad, viii. 6. 3.

⁷ Byron, *Lara*, i. 29.

to the noble men of antiquity, and will continue his conversations with them. When Kierkegaard interprets this as the indifference of irony, he has a correct feeling that the explanation of death and the view of the future life which Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates are not rigidly dogmatic nor a formal description, but are marked by the delicacy and grace of the Athenian spirit, touching lightly the possibilities and conceptions of what is beyond the grave, without being entangled in, or pledged to them. But Kierkegaard does not notice that behind the words there is profound earnestness, viz. the assurance of a moral faith in God. So, if Socrates is to be compared with the psalmists of Israel, it should be with the poet, perhaps contemporaneous, who at the end of the seventy-third psalm breaks through the gloomy gates of death. No calamity exists for him who holds to the good; to him the gods are not indifferent. 'When I have thee, O Lord, I desire nothing in heaven nor on earth.' Alas, the tone is not the same. The self-confident calm of the old dialectician, awakener, and investigator rings unlike the passionate cry of victory from the struggling soul of the psalmist. On one hand there is the nameless vindicator (the god) of the moral cosmic order, on the other Jahve revealed in history and human life. But I fancy we can place both of them in the pantheon of the conquerors of death.

There is a universal moral claim. But it has to be individualized. In accordance with the utterance of the Delphic oracle (although, to be sure, that was otherwise intended), Socrates exhorts every one: Know thyself. The oracle meant: Know that you are only a man. Don't commit yourself to Hybris, the sin of sins. Don't intrude upon the divine sphere; don't be too bad, too good, too happy, too sure, too successful. Even a man like Thucydides, although an unbeliever, was afraid of Hybris, like Voltaire. But Socrates meant: examine your life; gain an insight into your vocation; know what you are doing. For this purpose he urges the individual to ask questions which will lead him to independent and reasonable knowledge. Man must not be content with what the thoughtless world values highly.

'You Athenian, don't you blush to care for money so as to

get for your self as much as possible, and for honour and glory? But about wisdom and truth, about your soul, how it is to become as good as possible, about that you don't care, or think. And if any one opposes me and declares that he cares about his soul, I don't let him go at once or take my departure, but I question him and try him and examine him, and if he does not appear to me to possess virtue, though he declare that he does, then I take him to task for esteeming so little what is most valuable, and for valuing so highly what is inferior.'¹

The *Apology* and the *Memorabilia*, along with the evidence of Aristotle, leave no room for doubt. The knowledge that Socrates aimed at eliciting from men by his dialectics and his 'midwifery', *μαιευτική*, is mainly concerned with human life. He aims at purely human insight in contrast to what the others teach, which is more than human. Not without irony he adds: I am sorry that I don't understand their wisdom.² And for him the human implied two inseparably connected factors: (1) the moral life in general—right and wrong, good and evil; (2) the special task and occupation of the individual in the community, whether statesman or artisan. In his religion these two factors are not separate but woven together, viz. (1) the assurance of a moral world-order, which warrants the axiom, self-evident to Socrates, that virtue and happiness are indissolubly united; and (2) the assurance of having a particular service appointed for him by the divinity. What appertained to his service had the same sacred importance and the same unconditional authority as that which we term the dictates of conscience and the moral law. Consequently, Socrates grudged no time in dealing with individuals. In this he resembles Jesus. The most enduring work is that which deals with men, not in a lump, but individually, one by one. It was a serious question for Socrates with whom he should really get into touch, as distinct from all those he spoke to.³ Every human condition offered to him an urgent task within its sphere. He won his authority not by speaking to crowds but by dealing with individuals and examining himself and them. Hence came his freedom from occupation, *ἀσχολία*, which the Athenians

¹ *Apology*, 29 D, E.

² *Ibid.* 20 C.

³ *Theaetetus*, 150.

ought to have provided for him. For what looked like idleness was his urgent business which he performed with invariable and unruffled consistency.¹

The vocation of Socrates separates him from all his fellows. He knew that he himself was the greatest gift bestowed upon the city by God. Jesus, too, was alone in his vocation. The Athenians would be very unlikely to find the equal of Socrates if they got rid of him.

'Such a man will scarcely rise up again among you, fellow-countrymen. So if you listen to me, you will acquit me.'²

'It is acknowledged that Socrates differs in some way from the mass of mankind.'³

'That I, such as I am, have been given to the state by God, you ought by now to understand. There is really something more than human in the circumstance that, for so many years, I have neglected all my own affairs and left my domestic concerns uncared for, while I always have regard to your welfare, approaching each one of you like a father or an elder brother and exhorting him to strive after virtue.'⁴

These high claims of Socrates have annoyed many later readers besides the Athenians, who heard him on that spring day in the year 399 B.C. The Jews, too, found Jesus and his claims unreasonable. 'Whom makest thou thyself?'

It is a mark of pettiness and ignorance to confound the calm conviction, entertained by the great of their significance, and their consequent self-esteem, with human pride or with the swelling vanity which has disfigured some important names in Science and Art, harmless as it often was. The greatness of Socrates is surely beyond all denial. Schopenhauer, naturally, is offended with Socrates. Such burly spiritual and bodily health was bound to appear irritating and arrogant to a nature like his. It arouses his particular disapproval that Socrates has written nothing. All really intelligent people have done so. Schopenhauer would attach all spiritual greatness to the pen, for he himself could use no other instrument. It is rather the case that the most profound spirits have written nothing for their contemporaries nor for

¹ *Apology*, 23 B, 36 D, 33 A.

³ *Ibid.* 34 E.

⁴ *Ibid.* 31 B.

² *Ibid.*, 31 A.

⁵ St. John viii. 53.

posterity. Buddha, Socrates, and Jesus were able to write, but did not consider it worth doing. Maybe they had no time or they had more important things to do. We are told in the Gospel that Jesus wrote. But he wrote in the sand. Those three wrote in the human heart. Perhaps Schopenhauer was satisfied with Mohammed. He had at any rate the will to write. And as he could not write himself, he dictated his sacred book. Plato's opinion differs from that of Schopenhauer respecting the relationship between authorship and spiritual greatness. It is in the latter part of one of his most beautiful dialogues, *Phaedrus*, that he deals with this subject. Ammon, the Egyptian god, is not altogether pleased that Thoth invented the art of writing. For a script has no discrimination; it gets into the hands of those who do not understand as well as of those who do, of the unprepared as well as of the prepared.¹ It cannot answer questions or defend itself from attacks. It lacks the flexibility and address of the speaker. Instruction must be written in souls, not in books. It is done by means of conversation. Not by lectures and rhetoric, but by oral instruction which pays careful regard to the qualifications of the other, deals with his objections and really convinces. This splendid homage to the method of Socrates is all the more convincing because it is ascribed to him by a man who was himself one of the sovereign writers of the world.

If we hold the opinion expressed in Byron's words in *Don Juan*:² 'Great Socrates! And Thou diviner still', we ought to be able to understand Socrates' self-consciousness also.

I shall not here discuss the greatest example, him, I mean, who says in the Gospel: 'All things have been given to me by my Father.' 'He, who seeth me, seeth the Father.' There are plenty of examples given by men inferior to him, yet great. St. Augustine relates in the *Confessions* that he had read Aristotle's abstruse statement of the categories and understood them without any explanation. Nasir Khosru³ found

¹ Gomperz, op. cit., ii, p. 336.

² Byron, *Don Juan*, xv. 18. Byron adds: "Great Socrates? And Thou diviner still." As it is necessary in these times to avoid ambiguity, I say that I mean by "Diviner still" CHRIST. If ever God was man—or man God, he was both.

³ A. Christensen, *Muhammedanske Digtere og Tænkere*, p. 85.

that he surpassed all his fellow-men. Luther wrote:¹ 'St. Peter, Paul, Augustine, Ambrose, John Huss, I Martinus, from where have all these come?' Mozart wrote to his father about the one who has a mediocre talent and the one who has superior talent, 'which it would be godless of me not to ascribe to myself'. Goethe affords a splendid example of the self-consciousness of the great, their modesty, and their clear understanding of their mission:² 'Tieck has very considerable talent, but when they put him on a level with me, they err. I can say this openly, for what does it matter to me? I did not create myself. It is as if I should compare myself to Shakespeare who did not create himself either, who is nevertheless a being of higher degree; to him I look up and to him I bow in reverence.' Anders Zorn also knew that after Rembrandt there had never been an etcher like himself. Of the self-esteem of Kierkegaard we read:³ 'So I went out into life favoured in every way respecting spiritual gifts and outward conditions. . . . I have never in my life been destitute of the belief that we can do what we will.'

Socrates had no choice. Even if he desired another occupation, there was no alternative for him. His will was captive to the will of God. His vocation lay upon him as an imperative and liberating necessity. Obey—or desert his post. Socrates feels like a soldier under high command.⁴

'Where a man has placed himself, thinking that it is the best, or where a man has been placed by his commander, there he must, in my opinion, hold out in spite of danger and not care about death or anything else except what is shameful.'

When, after the first ballot, the punishment is to be allotted, he returns to the same matter:

'Now perhaps some one says: Socrates, can you not remain silent and quiet during your exile? In that matter it is most difficult to convince some of you. For if I say that it would be disobedience to God, and that therefore I cannot live inactive, you will consider that I am ironically withholding from you what I think and, therefore, will not believe me.'⁵

¹ Luthers *Werke*, xlix, p. 435.

² Höfding, *Mindre Arbejder*, ii, p. 227.

³ Kierkegaard, *Synspunktet for min Forfattervirksomhed*, p. 565.

⁴ *Apology*, 28 D.

⁵ *Ibid.* 37 E.

Between these two things—the office especially assigned him by the god and the assurance—there is an inner and intimate connexion. And throughout Socrates' life it was never broken in his consciousness. He knew no *δεισιδαιμονία*, no fear of the powers, no slavish submission, no fear of Hybris. Herein lies an essential part of the originality of Socrates in the religious history of Greece. There is no trace of that fear of envious gods found both in popular belief and the classical Olympian worship, but neither was there a drop of the elixir of Orphism and Dionysian religion which intoxicated Plato and his fellow-thinkers. Socrates overcame the dread of the gods not by the mystical desire to be deified, but by a trust in God depending on loyalty to his vocation. Apart from his religious foundation, his trust, Socrates would give little but an impression of utility and honest prose.

V. *Death, the Soul*

There is an evident difference between Socratism and Platonism. They represent different types of religion and they are, in so far as mysticism denotes an enhancement of religion, both so strongly religious that we might speak of Socratic and Platonic mysticism. At the outset we may choose a point where the difference is conspicuous. We have already remarked the difference between the *Apology* and the *Phaedo* on the question of what comes after death.

The trial and the sentence are described in the *Apology*. The interval between the sentence and the day of execution is described in *Crito*. Crito wanted to help Socrates to flee. But the latter would not sully his soul with unrighteousness by breaking the law. The dialogue *Crito* is of later date. In the *Phaedo* the last day is described.

The dialogue of the *Phaedo* is the Song of Songs of the belief in immortality. Socrates employs his last moments in showing the immortality of the soul. It is Plato who says that he does this. Lönnborg¹ supposes that earlier conversations between the friends are recorded in this dialogue. Its essential atmosphere and contents can scarcely come from Socrates. So

¹ Lönnborg, *Dike och Eros*, ii. pp. 237 sqq.

we do not attach great importance to these proofs of the immortality of the soul.

The following view is found in Plato from the *Gorgias* to the *Timaeus*, though with important differences of detail. This life is a fall from the pure altitude of souls. The soul and its activity are defiled by the body. Or the soul is imprisoned in the body. Death is a release. Thereafter the true life will begin again. Plato's doctrine of the soul is the fulfilment of animism as in India. Souls are eternal entities, principles of movement and knowledge, as with Samkhya. Their spiritual contents arise from what they have beheld of ideas: the unmoved, eternally resting, spiritual reality. In the *Timaeus* the world obtains a world-soul, then the individual souls arise.

Knowledge is only a memory of what the soul has previously beheld. Thus, according to this Platonic view, the soul lives in the past, which existed prior to earthly existence, and also in the future, in the pure existence which will arise when the soul is no longer enclosed in the defiling prison of the body.

But Socrates does not live in the past, nor in the future; he lives entirely in the present, the sort of life which we find later in the Gospel. In the *Apology* there is, as we have seen, no hint of a longing for death. Socrates had a divine vocation here on earth. He by no means regarded the body as a fetter or a defilement. He is far from yearning after a future life. This present life is valuable, not only for abstract philosophizing but also in order to make men capable and good.

What comforts Socrates in the *Apology* cannot have been something so remote from the present life. In China, in the poet and statesman Wen-kung (A.D. 768-824) we find something similar. He finds comfort in the fact that either there is consciousness after death, in which case there will be no long parting from loved ones.—So thinks the Chinaman; Socrates did not care for family ties.—Or else there is no consciousness after death, and sorrow will be ended.

It is possible that Socrates' thoughts in the prison took firmer shape. The two possibilities indicated by him in the *Apology* had perhaps been joined and welded into certainty of

eternal bliss. Confident as he was, this signified no essential change. But it is impossible that the fundamental view of the *Phaedo* about the body being the prison and defilement of the soul should appertain to Socrates. It is too directly opposed to the *Apology* and Xenophon. Socrates was much too consistent to cherish an idea so alien to the *Apology*. Has Plato himself changed? No doubt, but here we are not concerned with *ante* and *post*, but with two temperaments. The rich soul of Plato had room for the yearning of the spirit for the eternal, as well as for zeal for human society. Socrates is consistent, he is guided by his perfect trust in God.

VI. *Socratic Trust and Platonic Mysticism*

Orphism and the Dionysus-cult knew of means whereby man could be removed from ordinary life. (a) Purification, *katharsis*, was needed. Morality is brought under this head. It becomes a preparation, an ascetic exercise. But Plato drew the line short of monastic morality. (b) In this life man gets rid of the body by the means of ecstasy only. The mysteries knew of a delirious intoxication. Plato often uses the language of the mysteries.

The ascetic exercises, the preparation of the purifying virtues are followed by seeing, either in contemplation or in passionate longing. No one can, in this life, appropriate to himself 'seeing'. It is granted in this life on rare occasions when the soul in ecstasy gets outside this existence. Not until after death is 'seeing' perfected. Plato's omission to carry his thought to the point of fleeing from the world and the monastic ideal is due partly to his own spiritual position, but also to the influence of Socrates and Athenian political life. Plato's ethics were not negative, they included positive civic virtues. Two spirits dwelt in Plato's soul. The one perceived the world as impurity and a prison, the other saw the beauty of the world and the demands of the community. But Plato's ideal picture of political life is the work of the revolutionary idealist, not of the practical politician and historian.

We summarize in a few points the difference between the trust of Socrates and the religion of rapture in the dualism of Plato.

In both of them religion is personal and original, experienced and not merely taken over.

Both are unworldly in the sense that the good things of the world are not for them the one thing necessary. Both are in fellowship with a superhuman reality. And for both this fellowship is of such a nature that, at the last resort, it is beyond the reach of reason.

1. With Socrates the divinity possesses unconditional authority. No argument of reason holds good against the guidance of the divinity. For him who obediently follows this guidance there can be no fear nor calamity. For Platonism religion is a 'seeing', issuing in ecstasy and perfected in the separation of the soul and body.

2. The fundamental characteristic of Socrates is trust, experienced in his vocation. That of Platonism is a longing for the super-worldly. Man lives in memories and hopes. Fellowship with God in a real sense is limited to a part of human life, in Plato to philosophy, in others to the experiences of mysticism.

3. In relation to the divinity Socratism has thus a stronger sense of authority and unconditional obligation with the accompanying assurance and liberty. In Platonism the aim of life is union with God. This tends to be more a longing than an obedience.

4. In relation to the world Socratism regards nothing as impure in itself. Man has a positive task, a vocation, here on earth. Worldliness and bondage are overcome by directing one's whole life towards one's own task. Platonism really takes a negative attitude towards nature, human life, and the world. The distinction between evil and good is that of matter and spirit. One should keep oneself as free as possible from contamination. This flight from the world, if consistently carried out, would lead to an ascetic monastic ideal.

5. Thus, in Socratism, liberty is gained every day in the given task. It is realized in the vocation. The absolute obligation makes man free. Platonism aims at a deliverance from all bonds, an uplifting above all earthly and human circumstances. Plato's soul was too rich and manifold to

follow the thought up to that *Gelassenheit* which became the atmosphere of medieval mysticism and which made man the vagabond of heaven upon earth. The liberty of Socrates was not like the flight of the bird in space, but found its place and its shelter in the service committed to him.

6. Can we speak of a personal relation to God in the case of Plato? Scarcely. The term that lies nearest to hand is rather 'the Divine'. In Socrates, on the other hand, the personal character of his relation to God is manifest.

7. In the mysticism which fertilized Plato's religion the moral life has significance as exercise, purification, *κάθαρσις*, *vita purgativa*, as means of attaining the goal, union with the divinity. In Socratism, on the other hand, the moral life, the profession, the vocation of every person is an individualized divine service in which he is bound to cultivate his 'virtue', his capacity, i.e. (a) his respect for the right, for the will of the divinity, and (b) his capacity in the task of his vocation.

8. Trust in God, the life of the conscience and the simple grandeur of loyalty to one's vocation are matched in Platonism by poetic loftiness and charm and sublime endeavour.

9. The honest morality of 'the man in the street' may easily degenerate into prosaic moralism and a bare avoidance of crime. And while the lofty flight of enthusiasm is capable of tremendous deeds, it may also become indifferent to the claims of ordinary civic morality.

10. The mysticism of Plato can be universally applied to a psychological exercise for body and spirit even though but a chosen few attain the highest spheres. Socratism must be worked out individually in accordance with the differing vocations of men.

11. The strength of the former type is its spirituality. There is great scope for contemplation, meditation, 'seeing'. The Socratic type, the religion of trust, finds it easier to forget self in the task.

12. Platonism is governed by a super-worldly passion, Socratism by solicitude for mankind.

13. Which is the more rational? However strange it may seem, the answer must be: Not only because of the Daimonion peculiar to Socrates but also because of its unconditional

submission to the divine will, there is in Socratism a trait of irrationality, of faith. One must obey even in the face of reason.

14. It is a natural consequence that Socratism, the principle of trust and loyalty to one's vocation, is appropriate to every man, while Platonic rapture must be the privilege of the few. Religion here becomes a profession, a special occupation, the life-work of a few, enjoyed by the many only at second-hand.

15. In so far as mysticism betokens religion at a higher potential, as Dr. Otto says, and also in so far as mysticism denotes a fellowship with God resting on original personal experience and is not merely observance, tradition, non-genuine piety and worship, the word can be used of both types. Plato often speaks of initiation into the mysteries. In Socrates, the father of rational religion and critical thought, there is a submission to and a reliance on the divinity which cannot be derived from any deductive process of the Reason. One is tempted to call Socrates the mystic of vocation.

Thus Socrates has his allotted place in the history of religion as certainly as Plato.

The last of the trio of great men, Aristotle, was in the great century of the medieval West, the thirteenth, though frequently banned, finally counted among the Church Fathers. He was of incomparable significance in the shaping of western theism as well as for science in general. He belongs, however, to theology, not to religion. The divinity of Aristotle was the First Cause in a theory of the cosmos in which his logic built up a complete hierarchy. But this divinity of Aristotle's is the object neither of trust and obedience as with Socrates nor of longing and 'seeing' as with Plato.

Plato and Aristotle have profoundly influenced Christian theology; both also the religion of the West. Platonism lives in our hymns as well as in the preaching of religion. Aristotle became the classical philosopher of Western theism. But neither of them directly reveals a divine reality as did Socrates.

Socrates was to Plato more than teacher, more than master, more than an example of virtue. Socrates was to

Plato a revealer of divine life, 'an immediate possessor of the divine'.¹ Plato's entire literary production bears witness to this. It is, in its entirety, a homage to Socrates who nevertheless esteemed this homage but little. We have heard the opinions of Plato in the *Phaedo* and elsewhere, of Xenophon and of Aristotle, who in his monumental writings displays, once at least, religious enthusiasm and that is when he thinks of Socrates in his memorial poem to Eudemus. Socrates' personality exercised a marvellous power.

The ethical exhortation of Socrates is added by Plato and Xenophon. For knowing the right was not the same as doing it in their case; they needed an ethical code.

'Since no inner conflict disturbed the unity of a soul given up to thinking and since evil found no echo whatever in his breast, Socrates denied the power of passion, *πάθος*, and extravagance, *ἀκρασία*, the will to do good was a self-evident and natural phenomenon. This is the secret of the Socratic nature which does not divine its own greatness. . . . The splendour of the Socratic character is not diminished by our purely intellectual conception of Socrates, nay, the strength of the character becomes the weakness of the philosophy.'²

The tragic lack of correspondence between knowing and doing was beyond the ken of Socrates.

In Socrates 'the unity of ideal and life, of theory and practice'³ was not lost. In Plato they were distinguished, making ethics a necessity. In him there is an ethical ideal type with its opposites, not the naïve Socratic unity. 'In Socrates genius develops into blissful existence, in Plato more into a struggling process, in Socrates peaceful unity between the sensuous and the moral, in Plato longing, discrimination, the arduous ascent to the ideal.'⁴

Mutatis mutandis. In another sphere and in different proportions this distinction is in some degree applicable to the relation between Jesus and St. Paul. 'In Jesus there was never any gulf between his will and his duty, and the lamentations of the great saints never rent his soul.'⁵ St. Paul, on

¹ Kierkegaard, *Om Begrebet Ironi*, p. 124.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

² Joel, *op. cit.*, i, p. 256.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

⁵ Stapfer, *Jésus-Christ*, p. 191.

the other hand, in the seventh chapter of Romans expresses the lamentations of many.

But though himself consistent, Jesus saw the power of evil. He had come to save the lost. The mission of Socrates was not to save. It was reserved for Plato in his old age to gain a deeper insight into the secret of evil and, thereby, also a deeper tone in his message. Socrates did not become the founder of a religion. But a mysterious fellowship with the divinity was at the core of his nature. In his seemingly prosaic aridity as a believer in reason and a pattern of virtue, he yet stands forth in history as one of the witnesses to the living God.

Temperaments are deceptive. We are apt to connect with religion the ideas of yearning, desire, and poetic shimmer, of rapture, and of beauty. A superficial view is therefore inclined to deny to Socrates a central place in divine fellowship.

One's mind turns to another of the great souls of mankind, to the man whose name next to that of Jesus Christ has been honoured and worshipped by more people than that of any other human name for centuries and millenniums. I mean the Teacher of China, Kong-fu-tse.

Like Socrates, Kong-fu-tse was conscious that he had received his mission from heaven. Heaven had spoken to him as unto the ancient Emperors in the dawn of time.

The words of Erasmus can be applied to both of them: '*Fortasse latius se fundit spiritus Christi quam nos interpretamur, et multi sunt in consortio sanctorum, qui non sunt apud nos in catalogo.*' 'It may be, that the spirit of Christ goes farther and wider than we think. And there are many in the fellowship of the Saints, who are not in our catalogue.'

VIII

RELIGION AS REVELATION IN HISTORY

MOSAISM

I

WHEN we leave India and Iran and turn to the Mediterranean world, the origin of our higher Western culture, we find two forms of religion in some measure analogous to the two we have left. The high development of religious thought and divine communion in Greek civilization shows analogies to Indian religion. The Old Testament exhibits a prophetic revelation as well as the old Avesta hymns. We will not here follow the line of development which, starting perchance in Egypt, led on from Orphism and Pythagoras to Plato and Neoplatonism. We will pause at Mosaism, i.e. the prophetic religion of the Old Testament. The former line marks a natural and cultural religion which rose into polytheism and was spiritualized into mysticism. In Israel we have to do with a founded religion as in Iran.

History is a stumbling-block to Reason. Why should not prophets and mystics appear in orderly succession, everywhere, in all civilizations? The attempt has been made to collocate the different religions so as to make a system, where one sets forth one side, and another another side of the spiritual equipment of man and his knowledge of God, and where, at the same time, progress from the lower to the higher can be discerned. But into systems of that kind, constructed by a Schleiermacher, a Hegel, and others, the history of religion cannot be squeezed.

Then it is asked, whether it is not rather the case that every department of religion represents an analogous range of evolution, in which we are able to recognize one stage after another. The meritorious endeavours of a Max Müller, a Taylor, a Tiele, a Wundt, a Goblet d'Alviella, a Sir James Frazer, to show a line of evolution of that kind, which should be valid for every religion, have had and still have great value, but cannot be applied.

It must be admitted that the course of religion can neither be calculated beforehand nor described afterwards as a scheme of evolution. The path of religion is not everywhere the same. While we see in religion the work of God, we must accept with content what looks like a divine arbitrariness to our short-sighted gaze.

I find that view expressed, as a result of lifelong investigation of the phenomena of Religion, by Professor William P. Paterson in his Gifford lectures:

'When we trace the course of religious history so far as it is known, and when we study its golden ages, and especially the origins and the achievement of Christianity, there is a very considerable body of evidence to justify the belief that the living God has had to do with the historical process. There are many things in it which are very inadequately explained by pointing to the reflex action of a progressive civilization, the collision of ideas and ideals, and the casual appearance of the great man, and which fit in much better with the religious view that the movement was inspired, or at least guided and controlled by a divine intelligence that worked within it and through it in the pursuit of spiritual and moral ends. The Hebrew prophets made this assumption, which they used as the key to the interpretation of the extraordinary experiences of their people.'

The two peoples of religion on our earth are India and Israel. To be sure, a third should also be mentioned. I am in entire agreement with Paul Elmer More when he speaks of the Revelation to the Greeks. But the fellowship of man with God has been most profoundly influenced by Israel with its continuations in the revealed religions of Christianity and Islam and its inclusion of Hellenic metaphysics and Hellenic mysticism, and by India with its continuation in Buddhism.

On passing from India to the prophets of Israel there is truly a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*. The change is so tremendous, so amazing, that it cannot be adequately expressed. In the Upanishads, the consummation of the Veda, we apprehend a dreamy landscape from which there stand forth as symbols the lotus-flower and the grain of rice, the ape and the cat,

¹ Paterson, *The Nature of Religion*, p. 449.

or the grub the creeping of which from one leaf to another is deemed an emblem of the migration of the soul. Events, if such are mentioned, take the form of philosophical conversation. The events are mortification, the regulation of the breathing, concentration of the inner mind and deep sleep. All is concerned with the inner life and the state of the soul. The Vedic gods are there in the background of human life and mingle in human affairs, but little notice is taken of them.

"The whole religious doctrine of different gods and of the necessity of sacrificing to the gods is seen to be a stupendous fraud by the man who has acquired metaphysical knowledge of the pantheistic unity of self and of the world in Brahma or Atman. "This that people say, 'Worship this god! Worship that god!'—one god after another—this is his creation indeed! And he himself is all the gods" (Brih. i. 4. 6). "So whoever worships another divinity [than his Self] thinking 'He is one and I another', he knows not" (Brih. i. 4. 10)¹.

The gods are only forms or products of Brahma and Atman. 'From him, too, gods are manifoldly produced, The celestials (Sādhyas), men, cattle, birds, The in-breath and the out-breath (*prāṇāpānu*), rice and barley, austerity (*tapas*), Faith (*śraddhā*), truth, chastity, and the law (*vidhi*).'²

The aim is the beholding of Atman Brahman, of unity, of the unity of one's own soul with the Soul of the world. The end of ascetic exercises and insight is the eternal peace which is found in the eternal being.

"The One who rules over every single source,
In whom this whole world comes together and dissolves,
The Lord (*īśana*), the blessing-giver, God (*deva*) adorable,
By revering him, one goes for ever to this peace (*śānti*)."³

"These are, assuredly, the foremost forms of the supreme, the immortal, the bodiless Brahma. To whichever one each man is attached here, in its world he rejoices indeed. For thus it has been said: "Verily this world is Brahma."

"Verily, these, which are its foremost forms, one should meditate upon, and praise, but then deny. For with these one moves higher

¹ Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. 53.

² Mundaka Upanishad, 2. 1. 7.

³ Svetasvatara Upanishad, 4. 11.

and higher in the worlds. But in the universal dissolution he attains the unity of the Person—yea, of the Person.’¹

In the Old Testament all is action, concrete situations, history, the personalities seethe with passion and power. Lions, cedars, and oaks appear on the scene. The landscape, as well as the life of the nation and the tribes, and the fate and struggles of the tiny kingdoms, live before our eyes. Here God is never a problem; he is sovereignly near, dangerous, terrible, insistent. Other gods are known, to be sure. But to worship them is to the people of the Lord adultery, meet for punishment. At every moment in the lives of the people and of individuals God is in action. The great question is not the emotions of the soul, exercises of body and spirit and, finally, the perception of the One Eternal; the great question is constantly Right and Righteousness. With a passion unmatched in the annals of the human race, the prophets are dominated by the passion for righteousness and truth, even at the price of pain and rejection to them and their beloved people.

In India the way to fame, honour, and happiness is to know Atman. In Israel the way to fame, honour, and happiness is to practise righteousness according to the requirements of the jealous Lord.

In India the best religious literature takes the form of exposition, instruction, and discourse. Its nature, at its noblest, cannot be better or more beautifully rendered than in the stipulations of the wise Nagasena for his discourse with King Menander in the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom (Menander, called in Pali Milinda, reigned in the Greek kingdom in Bactria about 140–110 B.C.). What the renowned Buddhist then said to the truth-seeking king can also be applied to the Vedanta.

‘Milinda said: “Revered Sir, will you discuss with me again?” Nagasena: “If Your Majesty will discuss as a scholar (pandit), well; but if you will discuss as a king, No.” “How is it then that scholars discuss?” “When scholars talk a matter over, one with another, then is there a winding-up, an unveiling; one or other is convicted of error and then acknowledges

¹ Maitri Upanishad, 4. 6.

his mistake; distinctions are drawn and contra-distinctions, and yet thereby they are not angered. Thus do scholars, O King, discuss."¹

When discourses occur in the holy writings of Israel, it is between the Lord and the soul. Essentially it is the Lord himself who speaks. His words are irrefutable. The Lord's own words are actions, as are those of the man who speaks on his behalf. "Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow; to build and to plant."² Like the exhortations and promises of the prophets, the Psalms also are without a counterpart in the literature of the world—lyrics whose jubilant notes ring down the ages like trumpet tones and whose tears drop clear as crystal.

The unity of the Bible is a feature which binds together the products of many centuries and many minds, of simple folk and men of genius, of the quiet in the land as well as of heaven-storming spirits. This unity is best seen when Holy Scripture is critically viewed alongside the expressions of other realms of religion.

It is seen, should one try to find in the Bible a type of religiousness which, overwhelmed by the greatness of the whole, falls into a devoted contemplation of the All—or the quiet contemplation of a soul which, for a moment at least, has barred out the problems and duties of life and shut its eyes to the perceptions of the senses, in order to sink into itself. Occupation with the cosmos and the contemplative peace of the soul are types of piety which are sought for in vain in the Scriptures. True, the psalmists and the poet in the Book of Job, as well as the prophets and apostles, are enraptured by the marvellous majesty of Creation. But they are never content with a devotional view of Nature; that mood soon yields to one of adoration of the holy majesty of the Creator and his inevitable moral demands.³ To be sure, the Bible draws aside the curtain from the secrets of

¹ Milinda Panha, ii. 1. 3.

² Jer. i. 9, 10.

³ Ps. cxxxix.

the human soul, as no other writing in the world does. The conflicts of the inner life are manifested. The race is exhorted to reflection and to prayer which is the most trustworthy evidence of the inner life. But the preoccupations of the human soul are never separated from questions of sin and punishment, of misfortune and peace. Devotion is never cut off from life in its entirety. Man takes all his enigmas and troubles into his sanctuary. For what he seeks there is not a moment's peace but the certainty of God's nearness, power, and grace. The Bible is the book of the soul above all others. On comparing it with the other great documents of religion outside the sphere of Biblical revelation and, indeed, in some degree within the sphere of Christianity, nothing is more striking than the fact that piety in the Bible is never mere psychology—never monologue in the proper sense, never philosophical discourses but drama. The Bible is never content with merely describing the state of the soul. When the psalmist converses with his soul, he is not looking at the soul, i.e. himself, but he exhorts his distressed soul to hope in God;¹ he enumerates to his soul the reasons for praising the Lord.² In the passage always referred to in favour of meditation, Mary of Bethany does not listen to her own soul, but to the instruction of the Saviour. The Bible represents the independence of the inner life as being due to the fact that at every moment the soul is occupied with its relation to God, which is the most urgent consideration in life. The soul is not occupied with itself but with God. It is not interested in a state of peace and happiness for their own sake, but on acquiring it by means of a right relation to the Highest. For that is the only way by which man can attain real happiness and peace.

Both the Vedanta and prophetism arose out of a highly developed sacrificial cult, which in the speculation of India became the centre of the universe, and even in Israel dominated the official horizon. But as time goes on the sacrifice is no longer the main thing. There is a new trend. But different elements of the sacrifice were fastened upon in either case.

(1) In India the ascetic exercises and training, the

¹ Ps. xlii.

² Ps. ciii.

mortification of the flesh, the concentration of the mind and speculation, all of which were conditions appertaining to the effect and blessing of the sacrifice, were the elements which were gradually released and developed into a separate independent type of religion.

(2) In Israel the kernel of the sacrifice, the idea of a gift, an atonement, a normal relation to and communion with the omnipotent God, became the main feature and was eventually detached from the sacrificial cult. God is served, according to prophets and psalmists, by a life of righteousness, love, and truth.

(3) In China a third element of the sacrifice was developed, viz. the ritual. To China *Liki* has the significance of a Bible, according to Conrady, *Li*, the rite, the ceremony, embraces prayer also. 'Prayer is to him (the Chinaman) an act of courtesy; the correct bow an act of morality.'¹ We read in *Liki*:

'Of all the methods for the good ordering of men, there is none more urgent than the use of ceremonies. Ceremonies are of five kinds, and there is none of them more important than sacrifices. Sacrifice is not a thing coming to a man from without; it issues from within him, and has its birth in his heart. When the heart is deeply moved, expression is given to it by ceremonies; and hence only men of ability and virtue can give complete exhibition to the idea of sacrifice.'²

In India it was the unhappiness and suffering of the race, the vanity, deception, and transitoriness of existence that cried out for salvation. In Israel it was sin, guilt, evil, and unrighteousness that cried out for atonement. In India, instead of the sacrifice as the most important work, there now came asceticism, the ascetic form of piety, ascetic mysticism. In Israel ethics took the place of sacrifice, human life consisted in obedience to the commandments of God.

II

There are three characteristics common to the Vedanta or Upanishads and to the prophetic religion of the Old Testament, viz. (1) the unity of God, (2) the spirituality of God, (3) the sufficiency of God. God is all to man.

¹ Wassiljew-Stübe-Conrady, *Die Erschliessung Chinas*, p. 197.

² *Liki*, xxii. 1, S.B.E. xxviii, p. 236.

I

In the Upanishads, as we have seen, the unity of the divinity had emerged from the bankruptcy of polytheism. No one denied the existence of the Veda gods. They existed as well as other souls and beings and spirits. But their inability to save had become evident. They were no longer gods in a religious sense, but needed salvation as much as men. The highest divinity which priestly sacrificial speculation recognized in Brahman, and spiritual laymen had found in Atman, the Self, had not much of personal life. It was rather a restful unity, a state, a space, Nirvana, to which the soul removed, although the pious experience that man is, after all, dependent on divine aid for his peace and bliss is sometimes expressed in the consummation of the Veda, the Upanishads.

In Israel no pooling of popular gods occurred, no abstraction from the concrete and manifold in order to attain unity. We shall seek in vain for this in the literature of the prophets. Polytheism had not been established here. There was no pantheon. To Moses, and through him to the people, and after him through the prophets, the manifestations of the Lord, Jahve, had been so tremendous and awe-inspiring and, at the same time, so steadfast and mighty, that no one could be placed or even conceived by his side. In Israel we are not studying an operation of the mind but an experience of God's power decisive for all time.

In the older parts of the Old Testament Jahve is only the god of Israel. It is a mortal sin for an Israelite to worship other powers or gods. But other nations have their own gods, whose existence is not denied. Gradually was the power of Jahve extended until a Deutero-Isaiah, with piercing scorn, condemned every kind of idolatry. To the later writers of the Old Testament there is only one Power, one God, Jahve, in the universe. All other gods are empty shams or evil beings.

2

The divinity in the Upanishads is spiritual. The physical has lost its value. It is regarded as something unreal, a sham,

an illusion, a dream. Or the reality of matter is acknowledged but, at the same time, its capacity for bringing temptation, peril, and encumbrance to the human soul that is seeking redemption. The spirituality of the divine was thus discovered in its contrast to matter.

Mosaism presents quite another picture. God is the creator of matter, of the physical world, as of the world of the spirit. He rules in the physical world. No people has had a firmer footing in the good things of this world, in long life, power, offspring, good luck, wealth, and prosperity. But God is so tremendous, so mighty, so incomprehensible, so far above all human power and conception, so awe-inspiring, that no one may dare to make an image of him or even to make a fancy, a mental image of him. God reveals himself in the violence of Nature, in thunder and lightning, but also in the 'still small voice'. But first and last, he is manifested in the changes and chances of life as judge, punisher, and rewarder, as jealous avenger and as merciful and faithful Father. The prophetic writings contain certain statements which arouse our questioning wonder. Amos, the first of the writing prophets, says that he saw the Lord standing beside the altar and he said: 'Smite the chapiters, that the thresholds may shake: and break them in pieces on the head of all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: there shall not one of them flee away, and not one of them shall escape.'¹ Yet more noteworthy than the herdman from Tekoa is that aristocrat among the prophets, the statesman Isaiah, who stood at the height of Mosaic culture and its passionate fear of God. It is no vision or image that he mentions in Isaiah iv. 5-6. But when he describes his calling in the sixth chapter he says that he saw the Lord sitting 'upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple'.² And he certifies: 'Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.'³ He heard the voice of the Lord. He was seized by the hand of the Lord.⁴

Ezekiel, the visionary among the prophets, goes farther. He heard the voice of the Almighty. The wings of the four living creatures sounded like the voice of the Almighty:

¹ Amos ix. 1.² Isa. vi. 1.³ Isa. vi. 5.⁴ Isa. viii. 11.

'And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.'¹ If we read the continuation of this account, we find that it is a typical vision, a visual hallucination. 'And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.'² It is significant that when Daniel recapitulates from the vision of Ezekiel, 'I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him,'³ the reference is not to the Lord, the Highest, but to his chosen, the holy people. But in the vision of Daniel, formed of apocalyptic material, there is an image of God more tangible than anywhere else in the Bible, excepting the Apocalypse: 'I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.'⁴ Although Amos, Isaiah, and Ezekiel tell us that they saw the Lord yet we seek in vain in all the Old Testament for a description of the appearance of the Lord, Jahve. Most likely it was he who was represented as a young bull at Bethel. But genuine Mosaism was zealous against all attempts to represent Jahve in bodily form. His spiritual nature was not due, as in India, to the fact that the imagination and the mind, leaving the concrete and the transitory, had gradually pushed out to the formless and the infinite. But his spiritual nature, which the Decalogue declares, was due to his highness. He was near. The prophets marked his anger and his love, his interference at

¹ Ezek. i. 24.² Ezek. i. 27-8.³ Dan. vii. 13.⁴ Dan. vii. 9.

every moment. Events in the small field of history within the purview of their vision, as well as in their own lives, were directly due to the Lord's will and power. No one can see him and live.¹

3

In the Old Testament, as in the Upanishads, God is all. To own Atman Brahman is the whole meaning of existence. The life and endeavour of man is vain and calamitous for himself, unless it is aimed at the one thing needful—to behold its unity with Atman Brahman or, as in a system of religious metaphysics with a somewhat different aim, to seek union with the Eternal or the Eternal One.

In Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad speaks the great Yajnavalkya, the priest who became the perfecter of Atman Brahman mysticism and perhaps its greatest name. He was perhaps contemporaneous with the writing prophets of Israel in the seventh century before Christ. We can still hear in the ancient words how the unity of the soul with the Eternal, Atman, enchanted his mind and called forth quiet devotion. 'Artabhaga, my dear, take my hand. We two only will know of this. This is not for us two (to speak of) in public.'²

The answer of Yajnavalkya to Maitreyi is familiar even to our Western culture: 'Lo, verily, not for love . . . of all is all dear, but for love of the Soul all is dear.'³

In Israel, too, Jahve is all. Nothing else matters except him. The other gods are fought and abolished. To cherish them is adultery. No greater difference can be found in the sphere of religion than that between the quiescent eternal unity of the saving wisdom of India and this Jahve, flaming with anger and mercy and ever vigilant and active.

In Israel, for the first time, we discern something of that which is called believing without seeing. The beholding and possessing of Brahman signifies that the soul which has renounced the toil and responsibilities of life, as well as its labour and anxieties, and which, after energetic training,

¹ Exod. xxxiii. 26.

² Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad, 3. 2. 13. ³ Ibid. 2. 4. 1 sqq.; vide, p. 105-6.

has shut out external impressions and suppressed the inward movements of the soul, experiences rest and peace.

In Israel, as nowhere else in the history of religion, we are able to follow the dramatic process brought about by the relation between piety and prosperity and which, in many cases, ended in tragedy.

(1) The literature of Israel is dominated by the ancient view according to which prosperity is the divine reward for goodness, and calamity represents the punishment of God. He who suffers must therefore ask what he has done. He must propitiate the wrath of the divinity whether he knows his offence or whether he is seeking mercy for secret faults. In the incomparable stories of the patriarchs in Genesis and throughout the Old Testament, prosperity and long life are the marks of God's pleasure and, consequently, of piety.

(2) But the day came when unbroken vitality failed. Suffering came to the pious man. The prophetic writings and the Psalms are full of this motive which needed no seeking, for it was an outrage to the minds of men day after day and year after year. God-fearing men were oppressed by haughty men of power. The righteous was afflicted by the Lord with sickness, poverty, and pain; Yea, stricken by the Lord with what, perhaps, was worst of all—an early death. How this problem was brought to a head and obtained an approximate solution in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and elsewhere is beyond the scope of the present lecture.

When the present was dark, the eyes of men looked forward. Hope rested on the future of the nation. The Messianic ideal shone, with or without a Messiah, before the gaze of the people. The hope of a more prosperous future kept alive the belief in righteousness and retribution.

(3) But what boots it to the individual that the nation, in a near or distant future, will be great and mighty, if he, the individual, languishes and goes down to the grave, humiliated and oppressed. As the Swedish historian Geijer says, personality is a late conception in history. Prior to personality there were the clan, the tribe, the people, the nation. No people surpasses Israel in national solidarity. But solidarity did not always suffice. Men were no longer satisfied to

commune with the Lord only on behalf of the people and in the fellowship of the people. They desired to speak to him face to face. Jeremiah had an individual experience of God. The relation of man to the Lord grew personal. He was not only the God of Israel but also the Lord of the individual secker. The contemplation of the coming greatness of the nation could no longer suffice. Righteousness demanded more. Those passionate and insistent souls, whose words shine forth from the psalms like radiant jewels or like tears turned into pearls, were no longer occupied solely with the fate of the nation. They contemplated their own lives. Those who in their lifetime were plagued by oppression and sickness and would be snatched away in their misery, found no comfort in the future glory of Israel. The justice of God did not suffice. Would those escape the judgement who had defied all the claims of right and mercy and truth and whose arrogance had been rewarded with power and honour and who had lived sumptuously until they had departed hence in a good old age? The Book of Job, passages in the prophets, and several of the Psalms show how these problems tortured the thinkers of Israel. In the religious history of Israel, than which no other is more logically and dramatically inexorable, the answer emerges in due time. The dead may rise (Ezek. xxxvii). The attentive student finds in the Jewish idea of resurrection a peculiarity which has been too little regarded. A general resurrection is nowhere taught in the Old Testament. The resurrection is unconnected with any process of Nature or with the metaphysical make-up of man. The resurrection is demanded and called forth by the passion for righteousness and retribution. Who shall arise? The answer is: those whose lives cry out for recompense or punishment. Not all will rise, but those who carried down to the grave an outrageous contradiction between goodness and prosperity. The Book of Daniel says: 'And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.'¹ An earlier prophet witnesses: '*Thy* dead shall live.'² Those who die smitten and afflicted, those who are prematurely snatched

¹ Dan. xii. 2.² Isa. xxvi. 19.

away despite their piety, they die no longer without hope. God will put the matter right. He will awaken them to bliss. They will not lose the reward of righteousness.

The doers of violence who end their lives after unbroken happiness and prosperity are no longer for ever safe in the grave and in Hades. The fierce feelings of vengeance of the pious wretched shall be satisfied by the divine righteousness. These workers of violence shall also arise, not to eternal life, but to shame and punishment.

This retributory view of righteousness is long maintained in the apocalyptic writings. It is only certain Jewish writings, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam that teach a general resurrection.

In the older apocrypha, Sirach, Judith, Tobit, and the first book of the Maccabees, we do not find the thought of resurrection. Later, the idea of the resurrection of the righteous appears in the Psalms of Solomon.¹ According to Josephus the Pharisees who believed in resurrection taught it from that point of view. The Revelation of St. John adds to the resurrection of the righteous the resurrection of all the dead, which is to follow after the reign of the Messiah.² General resurrection is proclaimed only by Baruch, 4 Ezra, 2 Maccabees, and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs. The transition from the resurrection of the righteous or resurrection of many to the resurrection of all is so decided and so marked that we might with Bousset consider it the result of an external influence. This, however, is not necessarily so.³ R. H. Charles states correctly that the belief in resurrection of the righteous is not a borrowing.⁴ Also, according to Loman the belief in resurrection was purely Jewish in its most ancient form.⁵

Even when the resurrection of all seems to be known, the resurrection of the pious often remains the chief object of interest. In 2 Maccabees two passages are interpreted as proclaiming the resurrection of all, although there is no full

¹ Ps. of Sol. iii. 16; cf. 1 Thess. iv. 13 sq.

² Rev. xx. 6, 12 sq.

³ *Theol. Literaturzeitung*, xxiv, p. 512.

⁴ Charles, *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity*, pp. 128, 134.

⁵ *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, xxxiv, p. 83.

certainly: 'for as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection into life,'¹ and 'thou, through the judgement of God, shalt receive in just measure the penalties of thine arrogance'.² What is here refused may be not the lot of the pious after the resurrection and the judgement, but the heavenly bliss, immediately after death, which is taught by that writing, influenced as it is by Greek thinking. But the resurrection is above all an expectation for the pious. The second of the seven murdered brothers said: 'Thou dost release us out of this present life, but the King of the world shall raise up us, who have died for his laws, unto an eternal renewal of life', and the fourth: 'We shall be raised up again by him.' The mother encourages the youngest one: 'He giveth back to you again both your spirit and your life',³ and he knows that his brothers expect the eternal life according to God's promise. In the twelfth chapter Judas the Maccabee consoles his people saying that 'they that had fallen would rise again'.⁴ According to E. Schürer the resurrection of all the dead has never been generally accepted in Judaism, only in Christianity and Islam.⁵

(4) Before that, however, noble souls had found a higher way. The theodicy displays a moving drama: the mind of man struggling for enlightenment and for the honour of God. In reality it is presumptuous of man to wish to defend God and to be his advocate. 'Will ye speak unrighteously for God?'⁶ The theodicy, so lofty to a superficial view, is a testimony of human arrogance and a too human and too limited idea of God. How can a human being comprehend totality? Could we do so, we should be gods ourselves. Job wrestled with the problems. He won no theoretical enlightenment. He could not find in this queerly uneven world a defence for the righteousness of God that satisfied his mind. But he found and acknowledged his own arrogance and confessed before the Majesty of God: 'I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.'⁷

¹ 2 Macc. vii. 14.

² 2 Macc. vii. 36.

³ 2 Macc. vii. 9, 14, 23, 29.

⁴ 2 Macc. xii. 43 sq.

⁵ Schürer, *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes*, ii, p. 502.

⁶ Job xiii. 7.

⁷ Job xlii. 5, 6.

'The greatest document possessed by humanity concerning theodicy and eternal life is the wonderful didactic poem and confession found in Psalm lxxiii, a psalm of Asaph. The psalmist is not dealing with intellectual problems alone. It is a matter of life and death to him. 'The unrighteousness in the government of the world ruins his own life. Truly God is good unto such as are of a clean heart, but he had wellnigh slipped. He was inflamed with envy at the arrogant. For, godless as they are, yet do they prosper. 'For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish' (Ps. lxxiii. 4-7).

'The arrogance of the wicked knows no bounds. They are not content in their prosperity: 'They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily' (v. 8). They not only speak scornfully of the pious in distress. They attack God himself. 'They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth' (v. 9). It might surely have been expected that men would loathe and resent such daring arrogance. Nay, on the contrary, it is crowned with success. Their teachings are accepted. 'Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them' (v. 10). Is there no room in their thoughts for God? Do they not fear the Almighty, the Lord and shepherd of Israel? Nay, on the contrary, they proclaim his impotence. He is far away. What does he care what happens among the children of men? 'And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?' (v. 11). This short account from real life ends with the words: 'Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches' (v. 12).

What, then, is the good of purity and righteousness? The psalmist begins his song by recounting the goodness of God to those who are pure in heart. But is God good to them? Does it pay to obey God's law? For a moment he is overmanned by doubt and despair. Better howl with the wolves

and have prosperity on earth than be plagued every day for future gain. 'Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning' (*vv.* 13-14).

Now comes the crisis. The psalmist is checked. He dares to think out the thought, but he cannot act in accordance with his terrifying conclusions. The first check is his solidarity with the nation. After all, he belongs to the tribes who were delivered from Egypt by the mighty hand of the Lord and whose history preserves precious memories of men of God and deeds of God. I could give examples showing how the progress of doubt in a human life has at last, in people of our own time, been checked by the thought of the nation to which the distressed doubter belongs and by the sacred memories of that nation. The psalmist cries: 'If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children' (*v.* 15).

His mind does not rest. He goes more deeply into the matter. He has judged too hastily. The prosperity of the wicked is hollow and transitory. The eyes of men are shortsighted. In the secret counsels of God he apprehends a solution which his eyes and his mind cannot clearly comprehend. 'When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me. Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: Thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment, they are utterly consumed with terrors' (*vv.* 16-19). The Lord whom they mock may seem inactive. Does he not care what happens to the children of men? Yes, indeed! He awakes and the godless and wicked, however mighty and prosperous they may seem, are nothing to him. 'As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image' (*v.* 20).

The psalmist has to reproach himself. He had gone astray. He was drawn along by the impetuous eagerness of the narrow human heart. 'Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins, so foolish was I and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee' (*vv.* 21-2).

After this struggle with doubt, depicted with incomparable acuteness and pathetic illumination, comes lastly the deepest experience of the psalmist. This raises him above all contemporary religious views and forms of worship, whether of his own people or the rest of mankind. Something new appears. The Psalms as well as the entire Old Testament are full of this theme: goodness and prosperity are inseparable. 'When thou dost plague us, Lord, then must thou give unto us tenfold prosperity again. How shall we propitiate the anger of the Lord?' In Athens at the time when the problems of righteousness, of the course of the world and of the theodicy were troubling the profounder souls of Israel, that strange sophist, Socrates, had become assured that the good man cannot be hurt by anything. He was condemned to death, not on the cross of a malefactor, to be sure, but in as civilized a manner as any penal code in the history of our race had ever determined. But he knew that not even death could be a calamity, when he met his doom with the consent and under the direction of the divinity.

The writer of the seventy-third Psalm is of another temper. He does not reach a calm conclusion from the assurance of the good and the right of the good and the guidance of God. But the nearness of God, the love of God, overwhelm him. What does anything matter in comparison with owning the Lord? In these ever-memorable verses, for the first time in the history of religion, a clear distinction is drawn between what men call prosperity and the moral and religious welfare of man. He does not seek to belittle the pain of the pious. But his gaze, which has been turned outward and then inward to the sacred counsels of God, is now still. It can be governed no longer by the psalmist. His gaze has been arrested by God. It sees no image. The Lord was too high, too superhuman, altogether too terrifying for that. But the psalmist perceives and knows that God is near and in God he owns all. Religion has transformed the problem of goodness and prosperity. Prosperity, what is it? Earthly success? All things earthly fall away. God is all. The psalmist yields himself entirely, without any reservation, without questions and unconditionally. His confession runs: 'Nevertheless I am

continually with thee, thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory' (Ps. lxxiii. 23-4).

Now the miracle happens. Other peoples in Iran and India had long known hells and heavens in abundance. The land beyond the grave was mapped in gaudy colours. The austerity of Jahve did not allow of this. Life on earth is lived under a pathetic pressure. Moments are precious. There was no room, no possibility for any mythology or sagas, telling of the future life, to grow and flourish. As yet the psalmist has no conception of the future life beyond the traditional notion of Israel regarding a shadowy Sheol. Then the miracle happens. Not as the result of the imagination, nor of native or borrowed conceptions, not by the operation of the mind, but by the inexorable logic of divine communion does the miracle take place. The gates of death are pierced by trust in the Lord, admitting a beam of his brightness and transforming the kingdom of the shades. In the manifold and oft-interpreted history of eternal life on our planet, I know of no passage where the victory of faith shines forth as it does in these lines. A mystery is revealed to us. An intimate process takes place under our eyes. Life and death and heaven and earth and Hell and Hades coalesce. Man looks no longer, as he has done hitherto, at the outside, at his fate, at the prosperity bestowed upon him, at the evil that afflicts him. The psalmist has no doctrine, still less any map of heavens and hells, but God is his all. 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever' (*vv.* 25-6). Have we fully realized the burden of these words? The psalmist does not ask for bliss. No heaven. What do bliss and heaven avail if God is not there? He does not ask for long life, an honoured career, family happiness, health, and success. Blasphemously enough, from the standpoint of the Law of Retribution, he cancels all this at a stroke. Whatever happens to him on earth is indifferent, if only he has God. Indeed, he goes a step farther. 'Though body and soul may languish, though he be lowered into the deep hell of shame

and torture, God is still his everlasting good. Never did a seeker of God find a more sublime expression. Decision and equilibrium are not to be sought in future retribution. The psalmist owns God in the present and that is enough. Here we have a foretaste of the Gospel method of finding eternity in the present moment. Assurance as to God enters upon a new epoch. It does not seek its proofs and confirmation in what befalls man outwardly.

This alone is a radical revaluation of values. But especially when we think of those other people of religion in the world, the people who communed with the Eternal in India, we are struck by something yet more noteworthy. The assurance of God is sought in peace. The soul separates itself from all that can disturb and hinder so that, isolated and alone, it may perceive and behold the Eternal. But the psalmist does not even ask for the confirmation of the feeling and peace of heart. This is the prelude of a theme which will occupy us when we come to the supreme expressions of religion on our earth. He is sure of God despite the contradiction of the senses and the events. Let soul as well as body languish. God is yet his portion and his all. The Saviour on the Cross, the saint in 'the dark night', Martin Luther with his heaviness of spirit, here is revealed the mystery of religion, its paradox, a certainty of God *quand même*, in spite of the bitter contradictions of life and, what is more, of one's feelings and one's own nature. We here divine what ultimately forms the difference between the sublime aims of ascetic mysticism and the all-defying assurance of salvation imparted by the Gospel.

The prophets, too, behold. But what they behold is not the *Unity*, not Atman Brahman, not Emptiness; they behold God. Not a dancing Shiva, nor an ideal image of Zeus, nor a mystery god in the flaring light of the torches. What they see they cannot describe. It is no shape. It is a gloom, it is a goal, a smoke, perhaps a light-phenomenon. We shall never be able to ask Amos and Isaiah what they mean when they say, the former that he saw the Lord standing at the altar (Amos ix. 1), the latter that he saw the Lord sitting (Isa. vi. 1). But they saw the word of the Lord (Amos i. 1; Isa. ii. 1). They saw a vision (Isa. i. 1; Obad. i. 1). Habakkuk

saw the oracle (Hab. i. 1). Nahum likewise. Ezekiel saw visions.

In the pre-Christian history of religion the ideas of divinity propounded by Mosaism and the Vedanta are the most remarkable in their differing testimony as to the searching of the race, as to the possession of the divine by the race, as to the impossibility of man comprehending and explaining God, as to his necessarily obstinate clinging to one or another of his experiences in his communing with God and his contemplation of the eternal, and as to the truth of Jesus' words that in his Father's house are many mansions.¹ The two most remarkable and significant conceptions of God are the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Jahve the jealous, who saved the people out of Egypt, the Lord of the prophets, and Atman Brahman of the Upanishads. Brahman Atman is a divinity who does not will, who never commands, but with whom man is to unite or to see his unity. Jahve is all will and commands, emotions, anger, and mercy, zeal for right and truth. A divinity demanding submission and obedience. It would be presumption to desire to unite with him or to see and declare man's unity with him. For that he is too high, too mighty, too incomprehensible, too divine. But man must obey him unconditionally, trust in him, rely upon him. Light then illumines all the darkness on his path through life and shines into the gates of death.

The psalmist is no longer concerned about divine works nor about the gift of God. He is not even concerned about the divine government of the world which, then and at all times, has caused the pious to doubt and to take offence. He is only concerned with God himself: 'There is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.'²

There lay the solution of all riddles and the removal of all offences. Entire resignation to God gave his heart peace and joy amid all the chances of life, however much his feelings and his intellect might protest. God was near. That was to him the meaning and content of life.

Anyhow, man cannot escape God even if he would. In Vedanta the soul endeavours by methodic exercise to attain

¹ John xiv. 2.

² Ps. lxxiii. 25.

a state wherein it can see and grasp its unity with the eternal Spirit. In Israel God is so inevitable and obtrusive that the psalmist in the 139th Psalm declares:

O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.
Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising.
Thou understandest my thought afar off.
Thou searchest out my path and my lying down,
And art acquainted with all my ways.

Thou hast beset me behind and before,
And laid thine hand upon me. (Ps. cxxxix. 1-3, 5.)

Whatever man thinks and speaks and plans peradventure for his own salvation, God knows all beforehand.

For there is not a word in my tongue,
But, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. (v. 4.)

The soul may be tempted to wish it were far from a divine nearness so chastising and desire to live on its own account.

Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.
If I say, Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me,
And the light about me shall be night;
Even the darkness hideth not from thee,
But the night shineth as the day:
The darkness and the light are both alike. (vv. 7-12.)

The question for a piety of this kind is not how to accomplish an isolation from all else in order to contemplate the One Being. God is near and demands all our attention, whether we will or not. All that man needs is certainly not exercise in drawing nigh to God, but obedience to the will of God.

Search me, O God, and know my heart:
Try me, and know my thoughts:
And see if there be any way of wickedness in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting. (vv. 23-4.)

But faith in the living God gave the mind no rest. The world with its evil and pain could not as in India be ignored as something irrelevant from which the soul seeks redemption. Israel's faith in God implied drama, tension, and tragedy unknown to the metaphysical dualism between spirit and matter. The intellect could not avoid the problem.

And at last the old doctrine of retribution fell to pieces. Behind its iron barrier another line of thought came into view. Suffering is not always punishment. It may have a sublime mission. 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.'¹ Further human mind has not attained. Further it cannot attain. Even the inconceivable and the inexplicable are divined to be a service of love towards man and God.

III

Having now seen the profound differences concealed under the agreement, fundamental to religion, that (1) God is One, (2) God is spiritual, and (3) God is All, we turn to that which from beginning to end marks off Mosaism from ancient religion.

I

Polytheism is tolerant; Mosaism intolerant and exclusive.² The stern exclusiveness of Mosaism was personified in a grim and mighty figure whose memory was so deeply engraved in the soul of the people, that even in the time of Jesus, the prophet and wonder-worker from Nazareth was regarded by many as being Elijah, risen according to the prophecy of Malachi, and on the Mount of Transfiguration the disciples saw in the vision, besides Moses the Law-giver, Elijah the prophet before all others.

The scene at Carmel is bloody, barbaric, and violent. It strikes terror to the heart. Of the ethics of Mosaism we here perceive only the inexorable sternness of the choice—the choice between Jahve and Baal. No one could then dream

¹ Isa. liii. 4, 5.

² Caird, *Evolution of Religion*, ii, p. 17.

that this choice, when deepened, ennobled, and applied to man's position in this world, would come to represent an equally inexorable choice between God and Mammon, between a spiritual life and the wickedness and vanity of the world. There could not be a more striking contrast than that between the tolerance of India and this fanaticism in the name of the Lord. True, the monastic orders contended with each other. The heterodox teachers strove with those who were true to the Veda. But where there was faith, it opened its bosom to every kind of god and spirit as well as to deified men and animals and beings. The tolerance of polytheism appears. It was foolish to exclude powers who might, peradventure, avail somewhat for the welfare of man. As soon as polytheism is clearly conscious of itself, it is eager to extend its power by worshipping new gods in order thereby to bring new geographical regions, new countries with their gods, and new departments of human life with their powers, under the sway of its own religion. Israel had not got so far as to polytheism. When once religion has reached that stage, it cannot become really monotheistic except by a violent breach with its foregoing history. Israel had images of God and after the appearance of Mosaism Israel was constantly tempted to keep abreast of the times, not obstinately to shut itself up in a narrow worship of Jahve, but tolerantly and far-sightedly to receive other powers and gods for worship and veneration. In Palestine, as in Syria, Baals were numerous. The nomadic people had already practised an elementary agriculture when they gradually, by dint of hard and cruel fighting, penetrated a region where other people before them were far advanced in peaceful culture. The struggle between Jahve, the jealous God of Mosaism, and the good powers of Palestinian civilization was still acute. Elijah marks the limit. In fanatical fire he cannot be surpassed. But the knowledge of the unity and spirituality of God, i.e. of the one true God, has advanced along the road marked out by Elijah.

1. At Carmel in the ninth century before Christ there was an encounter between nature-worship exalted to the rank of culture-religion, and the prophetic fear of God. Opposites

clashed. There were two antitheses, which need closer investigation. The opponents are Baal and Jahve. Much was at stake in that meeting.

(1) One antithesis is: the gods and God. There was opposition not only between national and local divinities, between the hill-god and the god of the plain,¹ but an antithesis between the gods and the one God. Baal had no objection to other gods. There were several Baalim. There were male and female gods. Ahab reared up an altar to Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria; and Ahab made the Asherah.² The capable king Ahab and his foreign consort from Sidon, like Ben Hadad, king of the Syrians, could use the formula: 'So let the gods do unto me and more also.'³ No doubt there were Jahve worshippers wide-hearted and polytheistic enough to worship other recognized divinities by the side of Jahve. But, like Moses, Elijah could endure no others by the side of God. When Queen Jezebel had the prophets of Jahve exterminated it was not because they worshipped Jahve, but because they opposed the worship of Baal. Her motive was surely very different from that of Elijah when he slew the prophets of Baal at the brook Kishon.

The difference between the nature-gods and the God of personal revelation became manifest. Jahve, too, had nature in his hand. He revealed himself in thunder and lightning, and fire and rain, in storm and the 'sound of a gentle stillness'. But his essence was not that of a power of nature; his essence was law and right. And he had manifested himself in history. He had brought Israel out of Egypt and given the law at Sinai. He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; he was the God of Moses. The nature-gods were the gods of culture also. Agriculture and the growing of the vine flourished under the protection of the Baals but were taken over only with reluctance by those who served the wild and yet ethically jealous Jahve of the nomadic life of the desert.

The survival and future of Jahve worship were secured when it proved to have the ability of incorporating the higher material culture. But as long as it was genuine, its

¹ 1 Kings xx. 23.

² 1 Kings xvi. 32.

³ 1 Kings xix. 2; xx. 10.

strength did not lie in the sphere of the material. E. Reuss writes about this:

'Never in history has it been more clearly manifested that it is not material power which, in the long run, determines the fate of nations but the spiritual endowment which they possess and know how to use. To be sure, this is outwardly manifested, so as to be visible even to a weak eye, only at decisive moments, and scarcely even then. In most cases it is of slow growth and works in stillness. The glory of David and the splendour of Solomon have faded and disappeared, leaving behind little more than a glittering shimmer and misleading memories; the most unimportant of the prophets, yes, indeed, the one who is quite forgotten, may take the credit of having borne a stone to the building which a still tarrying future shall complete.'

(2) A further antithesis lay in the difference between the prophets and the prophet. We do not know what was taught by the prophets of Jahve who were slain by Jezebel. It is unlikely that they upheld the uncompromising position of Elijah. Elijah put before them the merciless alternative: 'How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.'¹

We must observe this antithesis between polytheism and prophetic monotheism, between idol-worship and the worship of God's invisible majesty, between the tolerance of polytheism and the intolerance of monotheism.

Behind that we shall discern another contrast which has to do with the very nature of fellowship with God.

2. But first let us pause at the story, so striking in its power. No one could have invented these characteristic figures and events.

Elijah had previously dwelt at Gilbead. But now the time is come. He appears before Ahab with his terrible menace. 'As the Lord, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.' (1 Kings xvii. 1.)

Zeal for the fierce Jahve had in him driven out all other considerations. To that generation God revealed his unity and unsearchable power through angry jealousy and crushing

¹ 1 Kings xviii. 21.

majesty. Such was the time. Such were men that they were unable otherwise to comprehend the omnipotence of God which must exclude and overwhelm all rivals and would-be associates. At any rate, we can thus endeavour to explain what is offensive in the earliest appearance on our earth of the prophetic religion and of monotheism.

The die was cast. But Elijah needed further concentration and preparation for the great exploit of his life. He lay hidden in the east at the brook Cherith. He was at home with Nature; the friend of birds and fond of the springs. Wherever we go, we are surrounded by the culture and comfort of our civilization, and Nature has a harmless aspect. But contact with Nature may be grim enough to him who has to meet her on equal terms.

Elijah had to arise and go to Zarephath. He had to meet his fellow man. The lesson is a wholesome one. No one is self-sufficient. The story speaks for itself. 'And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.' The widow was gathering sticks. And he thirsted for water. He could not restrain himself. But he was modest and could manage to say no more. But when the widow had turned and was going for the water, he cried: 'Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.' Alas, she had nothing left and her boy was about to die. The miracle is related at length. The prophet laid his warm body over the child. He reproached his God: 'O Lord, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?' And they experienced the food-miracle of mercy and fellowship (1 Kings xvii. 10-16). It was afterwards repeated with the five thousand men.

The prophet pitied her. The boy was sick and gave up the ghost. The woman began to fear the holy man. Was it his presence that had caused the boy's death? Fear of the mysterious and perilous pressed her to say the words: 'What have I to do with thee, thou man of God? Thou art come unto me to bring my sin to remembrance.' Her misdeeds, which she had believed to be forgotten, had been reckoned

unto her. The calamity was a token of the anger of the divinity.

Elijah reproaches God. He corrects God. This formidable man dares to reproach him who alone is formidable.

The time had come once more to appear before the king. Now Elijah meets Obadiah, the steward of the household, a pious man who worshipped Jahve with great zeal and had even saved a number of the prophets of Jahve from Jezebel, hidden them and provided for them. But Obadiah is afraid. Elijah was not presentable. Anything might be expected from the man. If he obeyed him and told Ahab that he was come, then Elijah might disappear and Obadiah would be left with the message of woe, to be the victim of Ahab's anger. And yet Obadiah had feared the Lord from his youth up. Both kings and people dislike prophets of evil. Was it not Elijah who had brought misfortune over Israel? The people in all times have loved to hear flattering words and bright hopes, even when they know the prophets who so speak to be lying. Elijah has no fear. He is defiant and goes before the king and says that it is he and his father's house who have brought misfortune over Israel by following after the Baals.

A few years later Ahab and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, clad in their robes, sat each on his throne in an open place at the entrance of Samaria. All the prophets were prophesying fortune and victory. Only Micaiah, the son of Imlah, was odious to the king. For he never prophesied fortune, only misfortune. It was sought to persuade Micaiah. The majority was referred to. All the other prophets promised the king good with one mouth. In our time we should say: All the upright and prominent men and women had subscribed to the appeal. Could not Micaiah take the same line as the others and also promise good? But his reply is inexorable. He will only speak what Jahve says. And he sees Israel scattered on the mountains like sheep that have no shepherd. It was a blow to patriotism and national pride. The lying prophets became the instrument whereby the king was lured to his downfall (1 Kings xxiii).

Elijah was unable to adapt himself. But he could perform

the work of his life. The account is a graphic one. It cannot be rendered better than in the very words of the writer. Perhaps we must recognize a priestly addition in the determination of time in xviii. 29: 'in the afternoon', the time when the sacrifice was brought forward in accordance with the regulations of Exodus and Numbers. It is possible, however, that the service of sacrifice was so arranged even in the time of Elijah.

At the instigation of the prophet, Ahab collected on Mount Carmel the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. In the appeal of the prophet there are also named four hundred prophets of Ashera, who ate at the table of Jezebel, but they do not appear in the tense and bloody drama, that follows. (1 Kings xviii. 21-27.)

'And Elijah came near unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, am left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped about the altar which was made. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.'

The Mosaic commandment is older: 'Thou shalt have none other gods but Me.' But here, for the first time, rings out the bitter scorn of monotheism. It is re-echoed in Deutero-

Isaiah where the tone is one of accurate and effective irony.¹ Luther has similar tones when he attacks a form of worship which, in his experience of the spiritual and moral majesty of God, had become idolatrous. He mocks the priests who, by their words and ceremonies, call down the Saviour in visible shape to their sacrifice of the mass. And he asks the opponents of the Papists whither the soul shall be uplifted in the sacrament. Does Christ sit beside the Father on a golden seat? Every localization of that kind was to Luther a piece of idolatry which limited and decreased the majesty of God.

The prophets of Baal employ the most extreme means. 'And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them' (1 Kings xviii. 28). When they had cried and cut themselves so that the blood ran, the effect followed. 'And it was so, when midday was past, that they' were seized with prophetic rage and 'prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening oblation' (xviii. 29).

Now it was the turn of Elijah. He had urged a decision. 'How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him' (xviii. 21). The people answered him not a word. Now he desired to give the answer and to force from them an answer (xviii. 30-5). Elijah staked all on one turn. Should he dare? He dared. What was his life compared to the honour of the Lord?

'And it came to pass at the offering of the oblation, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said: O Lord, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou, Lord, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.'

He did not dare in vain. 'Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.'

The people kept silence no longer. They were shaken.

¹ Isa. xliv. 12-17.

They were no longer mere spectators. They were not observers ready to give a verdict. They were frightened. 'And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, He is God.'

The story would not have given a true picture of the times if it had not included the slaughter, no longer of bullocks and other sacrificial animals, but also the slaughter of the prophets of Baal (xviii. 36-40).

Will the miracle happen? For the manifestation of the Lord at the sacrifice was not sufficient. Was he not the Lord of Nature? On the exhortation of Elijah, Ahab went up to the top of Carmel. The hour was come to eat and drink and be merry. 'For there is the sound of abundance of rain.' Was it but a presentiment? The drought had lasted so long that there was hardly any hope of rain. Could the prophet fulfil his promise? He dare not look up. Bowing towards the earth, he put his face between his knees. Was he filled with doubt and fear? Scarcely. This medicine-man of Jahve, so unlike his fellows, knew no fear. 'The hand of the Lord was too mighty upon him for that. But the story runs that the prophet's servant went seven times up to look out over the sea. 'And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a cloud out of the sea, as small as a man's hand.'

The hour was come. The squatting man stands up. 'Go up, say unto Ahab, Make ready thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.' Hindered by rain? Shut in by rain? The longed-for rain that would save men and animals and quench the thirst of the ground. 'And it came to pass in a little while, that the heaven grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain' (xviii. 41-5).

Elijah had not made use of the tried methods of the professional prophet. He had not shouted and cried and jumped and danced, nor had he cut himself with sword and spear which, indeed, was forbidden by the Mosaic Law (Deut. xv. 1). He had taken no steps to excite his senses and spur on his powers. But now, when the thing was accomplished, when Jahve had manifested to king and people his incomparable power, his senses were roused to their highest

pitch. The spirit of the Lord came over him. He girds his loins. The king drives in to his capital at a furious speed, for the rain is pouring down, but the prophet ran before his carriage right to the outskirts of Jezreel. Hark to his panting! He has got superhuman strength. He has already, one would think, displayed greater powers of mind and body and will than a mere man possesses. He has dared, he has mocked. He has staked his faith and his almost menacing prayer on a single fateful moment. Nay, on two. First there was the sacrificial fire from heaven and then the refreshing rain from heaven. He has hewn and stabbed until streams of blood flowed at the brook Kishon. But now he runs faster than the horses can gallop. Sweat stands out on his brow, but the rain washes it away. In his excited eagerness he feels no weariness. He struggles on and only stops when the king draws nigh to his capital (xviii. 45, 46).

There dwelt Jezebel. Jezebel desires to avenge her murdered prophets. Elijah is told what awaits him. He does not wish to become the victim of the rage of the Baal-worshipping queen. That would be a defeat and the prophet's defeat would be the defeat of the Lord himself. He stands up and sets out to save his life, having to go right down to Beersheba. There he leaves his servant. He himself continues a day's journey into the wilderness, into solitude. He must give himself rest. After the superhuman tension and exertion he is overwhelmed by weariness. He is exhausted. He drops down under the slight shade of a juniper tree. His boldness has gone. The tremendous deed which no one had dared to believe possible is accomplished. He has completed his service. What is he himself? A poor hunted man, weary to death. He desires only one thing, the end—death. 'And he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.'

He lies down. Why live longer? What he had to do, he has done, in the service of his hard Master. Let me die. He lies down and falls asleep. There is comfort for the weary in sleep. Was it an angel that touched him and reminded him

of the pains of hunger? 'And he looked, and, behold, there was at his head a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.' He did not count the hours. He fell asleep again. 'And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the Mount of God.' Somewhat strengthened, he continues his journey as far as to Horeb, the hill of God (xix. 1-8).

He went into a cave where he stayed over night. There he made up his account with his God. The word of the Lord came to him: 'What doest thou here, Elijah?' The prophet answers: 'I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.'

The mighty deed of Carmel begins to fade. What was it? A desperate effort. What did it avail? He, the prophet, was more abandoned than ever--hated, persecuted, alone. Then comes the revelation of God, the loveliest and deepest that the writer of this book has heard and recorded. The noise and the storm, the violence and the furious courage, the cries and moans of the prophets who were slaughtered, all this cannot rightly express the nature of the Lord, which the prophet was taught by his God. He was to learn something else, he was to learn the calmness of a trust in God. A decision must be taken, not in a state of excitement but with ripe assurance. Therefore Jahve manifested himself not where the prophet sought him, but where the prophet least imagined that he was.

'And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still, small voice. And it was so, when Elijah

heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.'

Elijah now received the commission to anoint kings over Israel and Syria and to anoint his own successor. 'And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, thou shalt anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat . . . shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.'

In him would be continued the furious grimness of the priest of Jahve. 'And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.'

Elisha, overwhelmed, left all to follow Elijah (xix. 9-21).

Other scenes from the prophet's life are recorded. He punished the king and queen for their ill-treatment of Naboth. The king is very haughty when he sees his enemy, the prophet, before him. But the prophet answers: 'It is not thou who hast found me, it is I who have found thee. He had a secret ally in the breast of the king.'

'And it came to pass when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth and went softly.' The contrition of the king was not without effect. 'And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying: Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days I will bring the evil upon his house' (xxi. 27-9).

Even after Ahab had been killed in battle and buried in Samaria, the prophet's zeal in the cause of Jahve was as strong as ever. 'But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite: Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and say unto them: Is it because there is no God

in Israel that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?' (2 Kings i. 3).

And even then he had the fire of Jahve at his disposal. 'And there came down fire from heaven' (i. 10 sqq.).

The king died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken (i. 17).

Once more the Lord manifested himself with fire and storm in the life of Elijah. The impression made by the mighty man is reflected in the words of Elisha. Affection is mingled with the sense of his might. 'And it came to pass as they still went on and talked that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which parted them both asunder. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it and cried: My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof' (2 Kings ii. 11-12).

This story, unique in the history of religion, contains a number of features which exactly agree with what we know of the arts and practices of medicine men and shamans. At the same time, however, a difference, a contrast, comes into view. The prophet against the prophets. The prophet of Jahve, the prophet of the jealous god who revealed himself to Moses and in history, against the virtuosi of the nature-gods, the spirits, and the culture divinities.

3. The most important thing in the world is to say *Yes*. A *No* gets its value from the *Yes* behind. No progress is made by mere opposition and negation. It is easy to pull down, harder to build up. God himself is the everlasting *Yes* in existence. It is said by St. Paul in the second epistle to the Corinthians that the promises of God are *Yea* and *Amen* in Christ Jesus.

But *No* is also needed. Without *No* there will be no proper *Yes*. For then all that denies and destroys, degrades and delays what is right and good would be allowed to remain unattacked and unabolished. That is why a *No* is necessary in the moral warfare of the individual, in the evolution of religion and in the history of the race.

Intolerance is a late conception in the annals of spiritual progress. From the primitive and antique point of view

there is nothing to prevent the adding of new divine powers to those one already has. On the contrary, one should be anxious to do so. For, viewed from this angle, the divinity is not one and almighty nor, consequently, jealous. The power of the gods is limited. If other gods are met with, they, too, are worth acknowledging and worshipping. One may then expect more prosperity.

We can, to be sure, in the history of religion, find intolerance in the shape of rivalry between different towns and countries, a rivalry which then becomes also a conflict between their respective gods. But this is not intolerance in the proper sense. Intolerance only arises when God has revealed to man that he is the Only One and not one among many. The jealous God cannot endure associates in his rule. In the prophet Elijah the insight into this truth is accompanied by a fierce and bloody zeal which does not shrink from hewing down the priests of the heathen gods before their altars. A deep gulf separates this worship of Jahve from the insight gained by the later prophets and psalm-writers that God has more delight in mercy and righteousness than in sacrifices, and still more from the teaching of the Gospels and the Sermon on the Mount. But still there was at bottom the correct view that religion must say *No* to all idolatry and polytheism and let the one true God alone be the ruler in the hearts and lives of men.

Within the realm of higher culture outside the prophetic and evangelic revelation we see how noble thoughts of God, and deep and fervent piety are incapable of influencing tribes and nations, conceptions and morals, conditions of life and civilization, as long as the higher insight does not resolutely deny and reject what it sees to be wrong. India is the classical land of tolerance. Its seeking spirits have found the spiritual world and devoted their whole lives to that which is above. But they have allowed a popular religion with primitive conceptions, crude forms and abominations, to flourish in unchecked luxuriance. Pains have even been taken to explain that the high and the Highest are inaccessible to the lowest of men, who therefore should be allowed to have their superstitious and distorted

worship in peace. Pains are also taken to explain idolatry and other practices as being imperfect symbols of a higher religion. The tragedy of India is the *No* that was never said. Many beautiful *Yeas* can be discovered in its spiritual history. But all has been wrapped in the wide mantle of tolerance. No one has had the will or the strength, or been consistent enough to say *No* and intolerantly to reject what is at variance with the true nature and worship of the divinity, or rather, no one has received such an overwhelming revelation of God's power and holiness as would inspire him to abominate and abolish forms of religion unworthy of God and man.

Fellowship with God in the prophets and in the Gospels implies a decision. Asceticism, on the other hand, is tolerant. Sublime forms for the exercise of the soul and its celestial ascent, and its absorption in the one eternal, have seen the light in India. Different views have striven with each other for millenniums, and it is well when we have reached the stage that we discuss, as the wise man says to the king, 'as learned men discuss'.

But a higher insight has never in India promulgated its *Either... Or*. It has allowed the lower to remain and flourish, and has declared it to be necessary in its degree. Neither India nor Hellas has known an Elijah who forbids the people to halt between two opinions. And when a man of such a temper appears, as Nichiren in Japan, he seems alien.

The Mosaic intolerance which breaks out with dramatic violence in Elijah is thus significant in the history of the race. The liberal-minded among the leading men of Israel in the time of Elijah, such as King Ahab, found room for other gods alongside Jahve and tolerantly admitted or introduced alien cults. Why should not Israel have a pantheon as well as the great nations? But the intolerant Elijah has done the greatest service to humanity.

4. Such was the antithesis revealed on Mount Carmel and in the rough action of Elijah. But beyond this there looms another contrast. Two other important things clash here, viz. ascetic mysticism or ecstasy and the spontaneous ardour which wholly possesses the prophet's soul and action. This

difference does not coincide with that which we saw just now between the Baals and Jahve. As in all religions and countries, these prophets knew their art. They had methods which certainly were coarse and rough, but yet effective, of transporting themselves into the religious and divine state. They cut themselves, shrieked, and were violent. And this was not without effect. Late in the afternoon they were seized with fury. And it lasted long. They kept on until the time of the evening oblation.¹

Now it is to be noticed that the Baal prophets were not alone in this prophetic rapture or divine fury. It is true that Saul, in accordance with the Mosaic commandment, had driven out sorcerers and wizards from the land. But the prophets and the schools of the prophets had continued their work. In the tenth chapter of the first book of Samuel we are told about this. When Saul came into the city, he met the prophets who were coming down from the hill of sacrifice with psaltery, timbrel, pipe, and harp before them. They were behaving like madmen. To their own and the people's edification they were in a prophetic rapture. The like is infectious. The spirit of the Lord came upon Saul, too. He was seized with rapture. The ecstasy had its effect. Saul was thereby turned into another man. The spirit of God came over him and, to the astonishment of all who had known him before, he behaved like the prophets.²

The haughty Saul was to deign to visit and employ seers of the kind that he had driven out in the name of Jahve. When Saul sent his servants to take David at Naioth in Ramah, they saw the prophets in rapture with Samuel as their leader. The prophetic frenzy was infectious. The same thing happened to the new men whom he sent there. And a third company of messengers were also seized with rapture. Now he went himself. We are told that the ecstasy broke out as he walked or stood or lay down.³

The profession of prophet was still followed in Israel. When it is said in 2 Kings ii. 3 that the disciples of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha, and in verse 5 that the disciples of the prophets at Jericho spoke to him, we notice

¹ 1 Kings xviii. 29.

² 1 Sam. x. 6, 9-10.

³ 1 Sam. xix. 23-4.

that the text itself, though indirectly, draws a certain distinction between these trained practitioners of ecstasy on the one hand and Elijah and his disciple Elisha on the other. The difference is apparently one of degree. But the difference of degree may become one of kind.

I may be mistaken in comparing the ascetic methods of the prophetic schools and their leader Samuel with the fierce howls and self-torture of the priests of Baal. Such are not ascribed to the prophets of Jahve. In the history of religion there are plenty of examples of milder methods, as well as of self-torture and raging fury, in order to attain the coveted rapture and thereby win the needful *mana* or superhuman power for carrying out the wizardry of the shaman or other striking deeds.

But the difference is not a fundamental one. It is only a question of degrees, of civilization, and temperament. Quite otherwise is the difference between all these professional ecstasy-mongers, of coarser or more refined character, known in all quarters of the world, and the prophets by whom the Lord, the only jealous God, spake and acted.

In Elijah there was no trace of training or exercise. He is no trick-artist who can work himself up into a frenzy and in that superheated state, perform the most unheard of deeds. He is simply held by the overmastering power of Jahve. God is all to him, he himself only a tool. According to the Books of Kings he never needs to plague his own body and mind in order to acquire the prophetic fury or to bring out his power and cover his weakness. In his behaviour there is nothing of the self-training of the professional practitioner which aims at trance or ecstasy. While the prophets of Baal, in their fury, were cutting such queer antics, he maintained an austere calm. He was an obedient servant of the Lord. Only when the sacrifice had been burnt up and yet more when the rain was pouring down, did the hand of the Lord come over him so that he ran before the carriage of King Ahab. The attainment of a certain state was never the object of Elijah. He cared only for teaching and action. This is something new in the history of religion. But Elijah was no pioneer. He trod in the footsteps of Moses

and cannot be compared with him in greatness and significance. Even in these terrifying surroundings, all dripping with blood, the difference which here occupies our attention is manifest, viz. on the one hand, the activity of man to the end that he may be possessed by the spirit and filled with God, getting himself into a state which may infect others and impart supernatural power and, on the other hand, the activity of God which seizes man and makes him, either in his ordinary state of mind or else in an uncommon, uplifted, and perchance in an ecstatic state of mind, the mouthpiece of God and the tool of God.

2.

Why is Mosaism intolerant? Is it due to a national lust of power? No; other gods are acknowledged. Only for Israel it is forbidden to worship other gods. Not until later did Jahve become to the prophets the God of the whole world and the universe. Such is the formidable, ever-menacing nearness and power of Jahve. The most striking feature of Mosaism, in its distinction from other higher religions, is the *activity of God*.

1. Communion with God in Israel is expressed entirely in action and not in states. Not one of the great writings of religion can even approximately be compared to the Bible for dramatic and emotional life. The Old Testament tells the story of a people from the sanguinary chronicle of the conquest and the Book of Judges, to the seemingly unpatriotic idealism of a Jeremiah. The visions and oracles of the prophets enter into this story as actions, and the tension is continued in the psalmists even when the nation was bereft of its national independence. In the Gospel the last remnant of existence as a nation is at stake, and hope stretches forward to a speedy redemption, believing in the Risen One. Activity everywhere: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.'¹ But what can a man do unless it be given unto him? He is altogether a receiver. 'For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.'² He is able to do more than we think

¹ Phil. ii. 12.² Phil. ii. 13.

or desire. The Bible points to what God has done, is doing, and will do. Ask times of old whether any god has ever 'assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation'. 'Unto thee it was shewed,' says Deuteronomy iv. 35. In the same chapter the privileged position of Israel is sharply indicated: 'What great nation is there that hath a god so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is whosoever we call upon him?'¹ The more deeply we study the history of religion in various forms of culture, the more truth and significance do we see in this statement. The active presence of God distinguishes the Biblical revelation with its continuation, as clearly as possible from all other religions. The Lord has done all this. 'Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'² 'Behold the Lord will come as a mighty one.'³ His 'hand is not shortened that it cannot save'.⁴ Jesus knew that his Father was still working and his own motto was: 'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day.'⁵ The writings which give us the best conception of the mind of the earliest Christianity, the speeches in the Acts of the Apostles, do not depict what can be called a religious institution, or a doctrine, or a method of salvation, but a living history—God's dealings with Israel and mankind.

Solitude and contemplation are of great importance in Biblical piety.⁶ What is told of the Master that he went on to the hills by himself and frequently sojourned in the solitude of the wilderness, is true of the men of God before him and of all his true disciples. But he did not recommend a method of meditation intended to transport the soul into a certain state of feeling. Solitude is needed that man may be able to hear God's voice the better. God is active even in solitude. Banished unrest, peace of mind, and a collected state of soul are not the result of one's own pious action, but of resignation to the hands of God and contemplation of his works.

The significance of this feature of the Bible cannot be exaggerated. For it is the key to Biblical expressions and

¹ Deut. iv. 7.

⁴ Isa. lix. 1.

² Ps. ciii. 2.

⁵ John ix. 4.

³ Isa. xl. 10.

⁶ Ps. lxiii. 1-9.

conceptions which otherwise lack internal connexion and, consequently, also a proper interpretation. The Bible does not supply psychological information as to how man is to treat himself, but tells him to see and experience, what God has done and is doing, and to order his life thereafter. The aim of all God's activity is the setting-up and consummation of his dominion, from the Exodus of Israel to the work of the Spirit, the Risen Lord, in a human heart.

2. God appears as Will. There is no need to search for him and to follow the long paths of ascetic exercise and thought in order to find him. He is the Ruler of the universe. No one can escape him. He visits and he helps. He comes so near to his servants, the prophets; he is so insistent and unescapable that they are almost tempted to cry: 'Lord, depart from me.'

One consequence of the activity of God is that religious exercises have not the same importance as in India and elsewhere. Even Israel had her primitive ecstasies, *nevi'im*. They dance and are beside themselves, behaving like other shamans and medicine-men. And special preparation is not always needed. Ecstasy is infectious. Saul became excited without preparation. 'And when they came thither to the hill, behold, a band of prophets met him; and the spirit of God came mightily upon him, and he prophesied among them. And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied with the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?'"¹

Elijah and the writing prophets, and their equals, formed sharp contrast to these professional prophets. Amos says: 'I am no *navi*,' while saying at the same time that he prophesies, employing the corresponding verb to *navi*—*hinnave*. Uncommon psychical states are found in certain prophets. They have visions, they hear voices. But in this they vary very much. No psychosis of that kind is essential to the prophets. There is no trace of any ecstatic state in Amos, &c. Ezekiel, on the other hand, is a typical visionary who sees things in the other world and describes them with the same

¹ 1 Sam. x. 10-11.

prolixity and finical accuracy that we find in Emanuel Swedenborg. One suspects that here and there the vision came to an end, and that a systematized imagination consciously filled out the picture. To Hosea the will of God is manifested in his personal relations, in the tragedy of his home life. In any case, whether unusual psychic states exist in the prophets or not, we shall seek in vain for methodical exercises. There was no celestial ladder. No form of training is described anywhere. The chosen of God must, indeed, obey the will of God and keep themselves prepared, above all by chaste living, righteousness, and love, but no religious exercises are recommended whereby man may draw nearer to God. Yet the soul is lifted up to God or God is near and visits it. His presence is so formidable, soul-shaking, and perilous, that it never occurs to the prophet wittingly to thrust himself forward to the Mighty One, the Lord of hosts. Isaiah says when he is called: 'Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.'¹

Jeremiah, the young priest from Anathoth, moans under the strong hand of the Lord: 'Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak.'²

Man remains passive. No steps need be taken on his side. For God is the one who acts. In this Old Testament religion, which is strong in action above all other contemporary forms of worship, the lot of man himself is to accept, to submit and without any choice blindly to obey.

3. What God demands is no longer sacrifice but love. What man seeks is no longer advantage gained by fanatical zeal in pious exercises and in sacrifice. What he seeks is to please and obey God in his moral life.

The ethical character of worship becomes more and more emphasized at the expense of sacrificial cult. I hardly think that even Amos or the fifty-first Psalm desire to abolish sacrifice. But they employed the absolute language of

¹ Isa. vi. 5.

² Jer. i. 6 sq.

religion. God abominates a cult of sacrifice that would replace that which, first and last, the Lord demands, namely, purity of heart and righteousness of life.

The third feature is that every kind of cult and ceremony, every kind of exercise and every work of godliness gave way in the prophets to the one thing needful—trust in the Lord, obedience to him, truth and righteousness, an active compassion, care for the humble and poor, submission to the judgements of the Lord and the works of love.

In the teaching of the prophets there is an ethical strain from beginning to end. To espouse the cause of the widow and fatherless, to hold to the truth, to judge aright, to practise righteousness and mercy, that is the note which rings through the writings of the prophets and calls forth ringing denunciations of those who sin against the right, transgress the law of the Lord and trample the poor, the pious, and the lowly under their feet. Prophetic religion is not yet a legal religion. The multifarious rules which in the time of Jesus burdened the lives of men were not yet imposed. The prophets inculcated the elementary obligations of a high morality.

Old Testament ethics have scarcely any room for self-education. We cannot help observing that in the prophets of the Old Testament the training of the soul had not been given sufficient attention.

Approached from the side of India with its patient observation of sense-perceptions and states of the soul, and its exact instructions concerning the path to self-discipline and peace, the piety of the Old Testament seems to be outwardly directed. The prophets talk of what they see around them. And when the psalmists pour out their distress to the Lord, in nine cases out of ten they refer to outward distress, their hard lot, and the arrogance of men. Only in a few of the Psalms, e.g. xxxii, xxxix, xlii, lxxxiv, ciii, cxxxix, there is a glimpse of emotions of the psalmist himself which run their own course and are not mere reflections of outward happenings. We should, it seems to me, allow to the prophets, psalmists, and other figures of the Old Testament, a measure of self-discipline and asceticism.

But more important than this, there is obedience to the will of God. In the Upanishads the antithesis between good and evil, right and wrong, is obliterated. Brahman Atman is 'beyond good and evil':

'For this emancipation, an emancipation from the unreal and an entrance into the real, the reason is that to the knower good and evil are conceptions of partial knowledge which can no longer hold in the light of full knowledge. They are only verbal distinctions. "Verily, if there were no speech, neither right nor wrong would be known, neither true nor false, neither good nor bad, neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Speech, indeed, makes all this known" (Chand. 7. 2. 1).'¹

'When a mortal has heard this and fully comprehended,
'Has torn off what is concerned with the right (*dharmya*), and has taken Him as the subtle,
'Then he rejoices, for indeed he has obtained what is to be rejoiced in.'²

'He does not become greater (*bhūyas*) with good action, nor indeed lesser (*kanīyas*) with bad action.

'This one, truly, indeed, causes him whom he wishes to lead up from these worlds, to perform good action. This one, also, indeed, causes him, whom he wishes to lead downward, to perform bad action.

'He is the world-protector (*loka-pāla*). He is the world-sovereign (*lokādhipati*). He is the lord of all.

' "He is my self (*ātman*)"—this one should know. "He is my self"—this one should know.'³

In Mosaism we discern an opposite evolution. The farther we go, the more does the antithesis between right and wrong, good and evil, become sharpened. 'For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward. He doth execute the judgement of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.'⁴ 'He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?'⁵

4. The fourth feature is that *History* is now brought into

¹ Hume, op. cit., p. 62.

² Katha Upanishad, 2. 13.

³ Kaushitaki Upanishad, 3. 8.

⁴ Deut. x. 17-18.

⁵ Micah vi. 8.

the sphere of religion. In the Old Testament and especially among the prophets, all is dramatic, living, tangible. The prophets do not move in a timeless world of psychology and intellectual conceptions. God is near and draws nigh to them in current events, when kingdoms are shaken and overthrown, and in all the vicissitudes of fortune in their daily life. History and time gain unsuspected significance. As we pass from the high civilization of India, Hellas, and China to the Bible we find not only the record of history but the duration of time invested with an hitherto unsuspected significance. All that happens is felt to be of grave importance.

The prophets had not learned about God in a book; though, in the later centuries, certain writings had played an important part. They had heard the voice of the Lord; they had been called. God had chosen them. The hand of the Lord had seized them and allotted to them their vocation.

(a) The prophets heard in history the voice of God and discerned the will of God therein.

The singing of the congregation in church makes an impression, maybe a powerful impression, and creates an atmosphere, but you are not able to catch what is being sung. The singing is loud, but it is impossible to distinguish the words.

So it is with the music of life and the course of history. We hear, but we cannot catch the meaning, however we exert ourselves.

In church we suddenly notice a plainly articulated passage. There sits some one singing who is able to pronounce his words plainly. You hear the words and you can find out what verse it is that they are singing. You catch the meaning of the hymn or song. Such an one is the prophet. Through him events speak more clearly to us. He is himself a tool for God's creative work.

Is existence in its essence something resembling history, with its uncertain future, or is existence a predestined system, determined through existing causes in every detail for all time? Not a fixed system, of course, but a system in motion as the heavenly bodies are in motion? Is all recurrent? According to this view, the movement of life is an illusion in so far as every thing must, with mathematical

precision, return to the starting-point. Thus has man reasoned in all times according to the ancient system of physics. But now there is a new system. The great men and servants of modern physics agree in this point, at any rate, that the old physics will never be revived again. The view, that if an intellect could know and survey the present state of the world and the universe in all its details, it would also be able to predict its coming history in every detail, is a view that is for ever past, and with it the philosophy that was based on such a deterministic view of causality. The new system of physics is in two respects epoch-making for our general conception. Its ether waves and electrons prove their reality by putting into the hands of technical genius an inconceivably great power in exploiting the resources of Nature. But they cannot be seen in a microscope, and no sensible physicist believes it possible to form concrete conceptions of them. Rather are they symbols of the relations with which physics has to reckon. Moreover, as we just now mentioned, physics has cleared away that kind of determinism which formerly prevailed. Thus the new physics does not exclude from our science a reality that cannot be expressed in the form of a concrete conception. It no longer allows the world process to be shut up in a mechanical determinism, a merry-go-round.

Even before the entrance of the new physics upon the arena, modern thinkers had understood the world process not as a mechanism but as a process possessing creative powers, a process which gradually reveals a meaning, even if it cannot be *a priori* teleologically determined. Among these foreseeing thinkers, Rudolf Eucken¹ and Henri Bergson² are noteworthy before others, both of them not without reason having received the Nobel Prize of the Swedish Academy. A third investigator whom I have good reason to mention is Driesch, as his work, *The Science and Philosophy of Organism*, first came before the public as the Gifford Lectures in 1907-8.³ The work of most significance for modern thinking

¹ Eucken, *Der Kampf um einen geistigen Lebensinhalt; Der Sinn und Wert des Lebens*.

² Bergson, *Les données immédiates de la Conscience; Matière et Mémoire; L'Évolution Créatrice*.

³ Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 26.

is the Gifford Lectures of 1927, *The Nature of the Physical World*, by A. S. Eddington. A prominent representative of the new physics who had read Bergson, said to me: 'Queer, he has no conception of the new physics as yet, but he says nothing at variance with it.' In accordance with the words of Plato, the seer sometimes says more than he knows or, as in this case, more correctly than he himself knows.

About twenty years ago I asked the author of *L'Évolution créatrice* if he was conscious of any underlying connexion between his doctrine of a creative evolution and the prophets of the Old Testament. He answered in an interesting letter that he was not conscious of any such connexion but, in accordance with a wish I had expressed in my letter, he would like to test and apply his theory of *la durée*, i.e. the world-process, to human history and particularly to the history of religion. We shall not cease to hope that he will enrich our civilization with a work of that kind. 'The underlying connexion of his works with Old Testament prophecy has been noticed in France, too.'¹

(b) But the prophets were not content merely with a religious interpretation of history. They fastened on particular historical deeds, which God had performed for the

¹ A few years before the Great War, Henri Bergson had accepted the invitation of the Olaus Petri Foundation to give a series of lectures at Upsala University. Letters were exchanged concerning the subject of these lectures which were to apply to history and to man the fundamental ideas in his philosophy, particularly his theory of 'creative evolution'. I asked him if he was conscious of an underlying connexion between his philosophy and the prophetic view of history. For everywhere, except in the prophetic religion and the religion of revelation, history is at bottom meaningless, a mere monotonous repetition of sin and misery and saviours for different epochs who with, one is tempted to say, astronomical proximity follow upon each other in the cosmology of ancient India, which finds analogies in Greek thought and in China. A goal for history and the evolution of the world is found only in the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, which passed on the idea of a universal goal to Islam, and in the religion of Zarathushtra. Bergson answered that he was not conscious of such a connexion, but was attracted by the idea and would examine it more closely. When the eminent pupil of Bergson, Professor Jacques Chevalier, visited Upsala, we discussed the presumptions of Bergson's philosophy. I mentioned my own supposition and learned that a French critic had found Bergson Jewish in that doctrine of his. The opinion testifies to a correct orientation. For the comprehension of Reality, Being, under the symbol of purpose, creation, realization, insistence, progress, power, energy, life, has its origin in prophetic teaching. Cf. *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, 15 Dec. 1928.

salvation of Israel. Among all the races on earth he has chosen Israel to be his people. 'The Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.'¹ 'Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.'²

When Jahve is no longer regarded as the God of Israel only, this choosing becomes significant for all tribes and nations. Certain events of history reveal God in a special manner. In this case it is not merely a question of a more profound interpretation of the course of events, but God's power and will were manifested in certain events of the history of Israel as nowhere else. The classical ground for the faith of Israel was the deliverance from Egypt. But it is not isolated. The reforming movement at the close of the seventh century B.C. has a remarkable document in Deuteronomy. The position of the Lord with regard to Israel is there described as unique in the history of the race. 'For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for. And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgements so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?'³ No nation has experienced what Israel has experienced: 'For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?'⁴

And if we ask in what this revelation of God consists, the answer is: (1) God's work at Sinai. 'Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?' (2) The deliverance from Egypt; 'Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all

¹ Deut. iv. 20.² Deut. vii. 6.³ Deut. iv. 7-8.⁴ Deut. iv. 32.

that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?'¹ (3) The conquest of the new land with all accompanying circumstances. Yet earlier, to be sure, the first of the writing prophets, the shepherd from Tekoa, in his boiling indignation at the unrighteousness and the sinful security of the northern kingdom had burst into a question which in its universal tendency is almost unique in the prophetic writings: 'Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?'² Has not God led the other peoples too and been the shaper of their history? He goes so far as to make the Lord say: 'Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came! Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath, the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines: be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?'³ But the same Amos declares: 'Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite.'⁴ 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.'⁵

We caught a glimpse of a saving fact which supported the assurance of God, as well as his nearness and mercy, in Indian Bhakti religion and in Mahayana Buddhism. That assurance manifests itself in the Old Testament with a power and consistent application, to which there is no counterpart in the history of religion, until its saving fact became a person, the person of Jesus Christ, and obtained universal historical importance. Easter, the paschal feast, the most remarkable religious festival that is celebrated on our earth, marks the transition from nature-religion to an historical saving fact and then from an event in history to a personality who became the revelation of God and, thereby, the centre of human history. The paschal lamb still testifies to the vernal sacrifice of the shepherds and the unleavened bread

¹ Deut. iv. 33-4.

³ Amos vi. 1-2.

² Amos ix. 7.

⁵ Amos iii. 2.

⁴ Amos ii. 10.

to the first-fruits given by the countryman to the divinity. The festival gained new importance as a grateful commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt. Lastly, it was celebrated as a testimony to the victory of the divine and eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ over the powers of evil and corruption.

The sun is always shining, but its light can be hidden by clouds and fog. The lofty mountain peaks and the distant landscape may be flooded in sunshine, while we ourselves are surrounded by gloom. Does not the history of man on our earth also display sunshine periods and sunshine spots, where the eternal source of light and warmth is manifested as nowhere else?

Such is the experience and such are the claims of Biblical religion. Oddly enough, the prophet-religion of Zaratrusthra does not refer to any historical saving fact, unless it be to the mysterious revelation of the divinity to the prophet. And in Islam, that strange offshoot of Christianity, Mohammed declines any such position as Christ has in the Church. Perhaps it would be just to Mohammed to regard the holy book itself, dictated to the angel by Allah, as an historical witness of that kind.

Is existence at bottom History? The process and the end cannot be seen. For it is a process of creation. It contains an element of volition. Man is called to be the collaborator of the Creator. And *that* he is, not only the poet, the inventor, and the statesman, but every man who lives a spiritual and moral life.

Man should not think he can know everything. For existence is at bottom super-rational. Our intelligence does not suffice. At certain points it can penetrate to Reality and make use of its ingredients, powers, and conditions. But it cannot survey the whole of reality, nor penetrate its every part. It cannot know 'the thing in itself'.

The difference here indicated is bound up with the difference between ascetic mysticism and revelation. By exercise we can train ourselves to conformity with a system. The spontaneous form of fellowship with God is swayed by the living God, but needs exercises to keep the heart open to the influence of God.

The matter is so important that a special lecture must be devoted to it. The idea of a meaning or purpose in history and existence¹ saw the light for the first time, in any case, in Mosaism and in the Prophet of Iran. Adalbert Merx said that

'the last presupposition (for a universal history) is the unity of mankind and its uniform movement towards a fixed goal which, at any given moment, lies unattained in the future. Both thoughts are in agreement with the Old Testament, that of the unity of the human race as well as the direction of mankind by a guiding divine will to a goal of supreme happiness and peace.'²

5. What we mention in the fifth place might very well have come first. Prophetic religion in Israel is a *founded religion*, not a culture-religion, ennobled by the intellect and religious feeling. It starts from an historic personality to whom it never ceases to refer. It was created, it did not simply become; it has a certificate of origin, it is not anonymous. 'Many scholars and those not the least able, have laid greater or lesser emphasis upon the importance of Moses as founder of a relatively high form of ethical religion. . . . No sharp line of demarcation can be drawn between the religion of Amos and that of the founder of the national life.'³ 'The violent elements in Jahve's character he shared with Moloch and Baal, and many another divinity of the neighbouring Semitic tribes.' But those divinities had nothing of his moral character.⁴

Pettazzoni writes that Monotheism is not a normal result of evolution.

'In such a case, how shall it be explained that ancient Greece, with all its magnificent development of philosophical thought, never embraced a monotheistic religion. It is far more a question of some particular event, which has occurred but a very few times in the history of the world (the great majority of the peoples have not become monotheistic by evolution, but by conversion, i.e.

¹ Bergson does not assume any telology, but rather a creative content, coming successively into view.

² *Verhandlungen des XIII. Internat. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, p. 195.

³ Burney, *A Theory of the Development of Israelite Religion in Early Times*, pp. 322-3.

⁴ Montefiore, *Ancient Hebrews*, p. 46.

when they embraced a new and foreign religion which was monotheistic) and this was always connected with the life and work of a great religious personality. The four great monotheistic religions of history are "founded" religions, in contrast to the religions of polytheism.¹

Karl Budde drew a distinction between inherited belief in God and chosen belief in God and applied the chosen form to the work of Moses. Undoubtedly there is truth in this. The 'founded' religion confronts the people and the nation with a choice. No longer do they merely take over an inheritance from their fathers. They have to decide for or against a new religious creation. Religion is attached to a person or to several personalities.

Within the religion of revelation, personal authority is an integral part of religion and is acknowledged as such. This holds good even as regards the Old Testament prophets. The revelation is bound up with their personalities, as Wellhausen has seen and expressed it with unsurpassed acumen.

'One of the conceptions of prophetic and genuine revelation is that, beyond all ordinary communications, Jahve communicates with the individual, the one who is called, in whom the mysterious, indivisible relation between the divinity and man becomes intensified and active. Apart from the prophet, *hoc est in abstracto*, there can be no revelation. It dwells in the human ego. A synthesis of apparent contradictions arises in consequence: the subjective in the highest sense of the word, raised above all rules, is the truly objective, the divine.'

The connexion between religion and the chosen man of God was not afterwards loosened so that one might perhaps regard it as something merely propaedeutic, belonging to a lower stage of religious development. A thing, unheard-of in the history of religion took place, creating the paradox of Christianity, viz. the fact that the religion of revelation was consummated, not in a perfect doctrine or guide to salvation, but in a person. 'No other foundation can be laid.'² In this person the human and divine, the objective and the subjective, are one, so that at one and the same

¹ Pettazzoni, *Monotheismus und Polytheismus*, RGG. iv. 188. ² 1 Cor. iii. 11.

time he is, in the words of Fredrik Fehr, 'the consummation of divine love and of human loyalty' and is the mediator between his own and God. The principle of personality is the strength of evangelic Christianity.

6. While we thus see in Mosaism *not* a typical stage in the evolution of religion, but a special phenomenon, a revelation in a special sense, this must not make us draw too hasty conclusions respecting the religious value of knowledge. We are rather led to the conclusion that both mysticism in general and the particular revelation point to the reality and activity of God.

IX

THE RELIGION OF INCARNATION

BESIDES elevating and inspiring thoughts of God and a passionate zeal for love and justice, we have found in the Old Testament religion two perplexing facts: (1) the foundation or corroboration of faith through historic events, and (2) the intolerance of other forms of belief and worship. Both these characteristics have been intensified and carried to completion in the Gospel and in the Christian Church.

Its truth is indissolubly connected not only with an event, but with a person in History, a Jewish rabbi of Nazareth.

The cross of Golgotha was, in every sense, a 'brute fact' in history. Nevertheless, Max Huber, sometime President of the Court of Arbitration at The Hague, could write to the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work in Stockholm, 1925, on the *über-weltgeschichtliche*, the 'superworld-historical' standpoint of the cross. History was transfigured.

The exclusive, and to human thought in antiquity and nowadays arrogant, claim of the Gospel and the Church to have the truth and that of the man in the fourth Gospel to be himself the truth, enhance the unique pretensions of revealed religion. We shall consider first the historic foundation, as implying the claims of the religion of incarnation.

I

No other human society has such significance and has had such rich, wonderful, bewildering, and important a development as the Christian Church. Many changes have come about. Diversities were found already in the oldest Christian community. Both multiplicity and freedom have been necessitated by a host of human temperaments, individual or collective characters, the incomparable contribution made by the Greek mind and other acquisitions. One momentous force, however, unites that fellowship, the Christian Church, from the very beginning throughout the

ages, doubted again and again but always manifested anew. I mean the consciousness of being a special *superhuman* creation of God, unique in heaven and on earth. That point is still to-day a question of life and death for Christianity.

The fellowship with Christ, the fellowship established by him, the Redeemer, between the lost human soul and its Creator and God, the new fellowship, binding men together around the Saviour in an eternal brotherhood, came into existence when the great Evangel, the good news, was announced by the Lord's preaching and mighty actions. And when it was accomplished on the cross, the prisoners of sin, the world, and death, were delivered and united into a new humanity.

The real centre, the real law, the real institution and organization of Christendom and of the Church is neither theological nor legalistic. It is a living personality, it is the incarnate Son, the risen Lord, who is known from his life and work on earth, and whose activity is developed by the Holy Spirit. Christ himself, the Word made flesh, is the centre of the Christian fellowship.

This new amazing fact that in spite of all divisions unites all Christians and has given to the Church a world-conquering courage, is the *uniqueness of Christ*, as historic person and revealer of God, and the *supernatural character of the divine revelation* through the prophets and through Christ. The eternal reason and will of God, the *Logos*, became very flesh. This view of the Church in no way denies God's general revelation to mankind before and outside of Christianity.

None of the apostles has given a clearer or more emphatic expression to the uniqueness and absoluteness of the mission of Christ and the Christian faith than St. Paul, but he knows that God also has revealed himself in a general way to all men.

The other nations themselves have been seeking for God, and he has made himself known to them. The Apostle knows that all nations tried to find God. 'That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he is not far from every one of us.'¹ But he

¹ Acts xvii. 27.

points out strikingly the contrast between the confused conceptions outside the special divine revelation, resulting in idolatry and moral depravity, and the unique self-communication of God prepared for by the prophets, fulfilled by Christ. 'The times of ignorance'¹ are now over. A man has been appointed by God to judge the world with righteousness. I need not remind you how St. Paul is never weary of emphasizing that God has entered into mankind in quite a new and unknown way. Christ is no *avatāra*, not one amongst several manifestations, 'downsteppings', of the Eternal Divinity, although Schopenhauer² finds it more rational to believe in many Buddhas than in one Christ. Nor is he a divine messenger, a *Rasul*, amongst others. He is, according to the whole New Testament, the only Son.

St. Paul's genius grasped the very soul of Hellenism as well as of Judaism and their common inability to appreciate God's fresh action in Christ. 'For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.'³ If we inquire of the gospels concerning the new mystery revealed in Christ and in his cross, St. John answers in very much the same way: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.'⁴ And the synoptics express the same chief mystery: 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.'⁵

We go farther and ask in what that uniqueness of the Christian dispensation consists. The answer may be given in two most essential observations, which are at the same time articles of our faith and (this I wish to emphasize

¹ Acts xvii. 30.

² Schopenhauer, v, p. 413.

³ 1 Cor. i. 22-5.

⁴ John xii. 24-5.

⁵ Mark viii. 35.

especially in this connexion), also, as far as I can see, the result of a critical comparative study of religions.

Where was that uniqueness of the new message centred? The New Testament leaves us not a single moment in doubt. The new thing was not a message, not a doctrine, but an historic person, *an actual man*, Jesus revealed as Christ and as the eternal Son originating a new life. Jesus said: 'All things are delivered unto me of my Father . . . Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me.'¹

St. Paul knew the Apocalyptic literature about a *new epoch, a new aeon*. Such an expectation was widely known even outside Christianity. It had come probably from Isaiah to the Sibylline oracles and from thence to Virgil. We find it in different shapes in Oriental and Hellenistic documents. We have a sublime echo of that expectation in the Revelation: 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.'² Now the unexpected and rather revolutionary opinion of St. Paul means simply and solely that the *new epoch has already come*, not with much outside show, but through Christ, his suffering and his victory over death and devil. Death has had its aeon. 'Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, therefore all died.'³ Now the new aeon, the epoch of Life, has come. 'And he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.'⁴ The Christians who live in Christ belong already in principle to a new creation. 'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.'⁵ The apocalyptic saying about the new, that will come when the old order of things shall have disappeared, is used here by St. Paul of his actual life with and in Christ. St. John has in substance the same message: Jesus said unto Martha, 'I am the resurrection, and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.'⁶

The uniqueness of the new Kyrios amongst all the different

¹ Matt. xi. 27 sqq.

² Rev. xxi. 1.

³ 2 Cor. v. 14 b.

⁴ 2 Cor. v. 15.

⁵ 2 Cor. v. 17.

⁶ John xi. 25-6.

Kyrioi worshipped at that epoch in the Roman Empire, as well as the uniqueness, the supernatural claims and character of that Lord, and of his message in comparison with all the current conceptions of the Divine and doctrines about man, was a scandalous thing in the antique world. Such claims had been raised already by the Jewish religion, but its adherents and proselytes constituted a very small minority, which would never in any way compete with the great religions and philosophies of the day. To an outside observer the *carmen* sung to Christ as God according to the well-known letter of Pliny the younger written from Bithynia to the Emperor Trajan, appeared analogous to the songs and hymns addressed by other worshippers to other divinities.

"There was probably no essential difference between them. In neither case was there much definite teaching: the aim, as Aristotle says, was to produce a certain emotional state (*οὐ μαθεῖν τι δεῖν ἀλλὰ παθεῖν*). A Passion-play was enacted amid the most impressive surroundings, and we need not doubt that the moral effect was beneficial and sometimes profound. When the Egyptian mysteries of Isis and Osiris were fused with the Hellenic, a type of worship was evolved which was startlingly like Christianity. A famous Egyptian text contains the promise: "As truly as Osiris lives, shall he (the worshipper) live; as truly as Osiris is not dead, shall he not die."¹

The Christian Fathers could not admit such a comparison. Their way of maintaining the uniqueness of Christian revelation was very clumsy. They considered the sacrificial meals, the baptisms and other rites and ceremonies of the different religions in that eclectic epoch as imitations, made by the devil, of biblical revelation and Christian worship. Such an explanation was also historically untrue, because there existed an interdependence. Early Christianity and other forms of worship influenced each other in different ways. The same judgement must be applied to the Roman missionaries, who explained the ceremonies in China and India and in pre-Columbian Central America and Peru as devilish imitations of Catholic worship.

¹ Inge, *The Church in the World*, p. 132.

But that method, used in desperation by the early Church Fathers, had an intrinsic truth in it. They were absolutely right when they tried to maintain the uniqueness of Christian revelation. Only they failed in so far as they were not able to distinguish, in the ecclesiastical fabric, between the essential things, the fundamentals, whether they belong to higher religion in general or whether they differ from all other religions, and the non-fundamentals, ideas and customs different in different cults or more or less common to the general sacral system and the general revelation. We find even to-day, e.g. in the papal encyclical against the *Panchristiani*,¹ the same incapacity to distinguish fundamentals from non-fundamentals.

Let me make a personal confession. I have devoted much of my hardest work and my best force during forty years to the study of comparative religion, a study which must necessarily be made on a philological as well as a psychological basis. When in our epoch the knowledge of other religions has become more general than ever before, the student is struck, and, I dare say, at first sight bewildered, by the multiplicity of divinities and saviours and ideas and prophets and teachers and doctrines on God and man. He is tempted to consider all those worships as *analogies*, that is, as more or less *parallel lines* of development which continued research may be able to bring into a pattern of evolution, applicable to, and explaining more or less fully all those different religious systems in their development. To a certain extent such a pattern can be made. And great systematizers like Hegel, Wundt, Sir James Frazer, and Durkheim, have tried to bring out such a normal type of religious development, applicable to all kinds of religion. But here, as in every branch of human knowledge, further analysis shows differences which seem at first to be only somewhat divergent specimens, but which bring out very soon to the careful eye characteristics which prove them to be rather of an essential and genetic character. I am told that a coloured man finds at the beginning all white men more or less alike, just as we find coloured men more or less alike. Later the differences

¹ Bell, *Documents on Christian Unity*, ii, pp. 51 seqq.

appear. It is easy to give some quite convincing examples of characteristic and profound differences, where comparative religion used to find only analogies.

Let us take, for instance, the divine worship of Buddha, Christ, and Mohammed. At the first view one thinks that they constitute the same phenomenon; a great teacher, a man, became later deified and worshipped by his followers, perhaps against his will. That process is well known in the history of religions. Perhaps during their lifetime, in any case after their death, all men and women who have aroused the attention of their fellows and manifested a closer communion with the supernatural or the sacred, gather about their lives and sayings and deeds an ever-increasing fund of legend. Sir Alfred Lyall and others have described that process, which is familiar to every student of folklore and of religion. It is most natural that scientific research as well as public opinion should have adopted the same view of the divine worship of Buddha, Christ, and Mohammed. But when we come nearer to the phenomena, we find that we have been mistaken. Such an explanation is impossible. Science is concerned with facts, not with general presumptions. If we analyse the three cases, we find them to be by no means three examples of the same rule. A closer investigation finds that these three specimens are quite different from one another.

Buddha himself claimed to be superior to the gods, who, like men, needed salvation from suffering. It would have been absurd for Sakyamuni to consider himself or to be considered by his followers as a god. The yogis, the ascetics and the mystics of India had already for a long time been superior to the gods. And Buddha himself was superior to the yogis and the ascetics and the mystics because of his full insight.

But on the other hand, he was anxious not to attach the saving knowledge and practice of his disciples to his own person. What he proclaimed was not at all what Christ proclaimed, himself, his own person: 'come to me.' No, Buddha announced the saving truth, the rule, the Dharma, which a man can grasp and realize in life for his own

deliverance and peace, and preach to others without any relation to Buddha himself. He used the simile of a drug: you had better use it without asking about the man who invented it, or who ordered it. Of course eternal gratitude connects the seeker of Nirvana with Buddha, whose name belongs to the holy Triratna. But his doctrine and his order are independent of his person. He is supposed to have said: 'Somebody, O mendicants, is following me holding the edge of my garment . . . but he is far from me and I am far from him. Why? Because he has not seen the Doctrine; and not having seen the Doctrine, he does not see me either. Somebody lives at a distance of a hundred yojanas. . . . He is close to me and I am close to him. Why? Because he has seen the Doctrine, and having seen the Doctrine, he has seen also me.'¹

We are reminded of the words in the fourth Gospel to Philip: 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.'² The difference is most characteristic. Buddha says: 'The one that hath seen the Doctrine hath seen me.'

It is related in the 'Book of the Great Death' that the beloved disciple Ananda wept when he expected the departure of his sick master. Buddha consoled him, and said: 'It may be, Ananda, that some of you will think, "The word of The Teacher is a thing of the past; we have now no Teacher." But that, Ananda, is not the correct view. The Doctrine, *Dharma*, and the Discipline, *Vinaya*, which I have taught and enjoined upon you, is to be your teacher when I am gone.'³

Far therefore was the historic Sakyamuni from claiming or permitting any kind of divine worship. Later, he has been deified in Hinayana and a vast number of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in Mahayana. It must not be overlooked, that those numerous Buddha-gods have no peculiar relation to the historic Buddha. He is one of them, not at all the greatest; he has rather an insignificant place in the enormous pantheon of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

If we turn to Christ, the situation is very different. He was in every respect subject to God's will: 'Thy will be done.'

¹ Itivuttaka, 105; Minayeff, *Recherches sur le Bouddhisme*, p. 218.

² John xiv. 9.

³ Maha-parinibbana-sutta, vi. 60.

But at the same time he claimed to be the unique and full expression of God's will and thought on earth. 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also.' In a Greek atmosphere that was expressed by the doctrine of the true godhead and the true manhood of Christ against every tendency to consider Christ as an inferior divinity. Athanasius saved Christianity. Pascal expressed the same truth in his wonderful style, when he said: 'Christ is the God of men.' Professor Glover has stated the case in an illuminating paradox: 'God could not do better than be like Christ.' That same Jesus, who rebuked the man who called him good, because God alone is good, claimed a unique divine position, not in a pantheon, but as the full and definite revelation of the One Almighty God.

Very different again is the case of Mohammed, who disclaimed any worship of himself. He was simply a messenger, the final and definite *Rasul*, herald, of God, of Allah. The information which Mohammed acquired or rather got without seeking or reflecting, from Christian hermits and Jews about the revealed religions, gave him the impression that a sacred book distinguishes the true religion from heathenism. Therefore it belonged to his calling to give his people a book. If one seeks for something divine in Mohammed and his work, one would certainly indicate the Koran. Later, when Hellenistic speculation was utilized by Muslim theology, it is not impossible that the doctrine of the Word, the *Logos*, applied by Christianity to Jesus, was applied *not* to the prophet, but to his book, the Koran, the eternal word of God. God has announced his will through thousands of prophets, among whom Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed are the most prominent. The Koran is superior to earlier sacred books. But Mohammed did not claim for his person moral perfection or superhuman mediation. According to his words in the Koran, he was only a man like the others, only a preacher, a warner, the first Muslim (believer). He had sinned and needed forgiveness. Everything supernatural must, according to strict Islam, as according to Mohammed himself, be separated from the person of the prophet. The doctrine of incarnation, *hulūl*,

has always been considered heretical by Islam.¹ An old tradition makes Mohammed say: 'Praise me not as Jesus, the son of Mary, was praised.' The Christian faith in Christ has a certain analogy, not in faith in the prophet, but rather in faith in the Koran. Mohammed says about the most important things in Religion: 'Righteousness is of him who believeth in God and the last day, and the angels, and the scriptures, and the prophets (in the plural),' &c.²

We could add a word about Kong-fu-tse, worshipped by millions. Nothing could be farther from his teaching and his reverence for Tien, Heaven, than to demand any kind of divine dignity for himself.

The analysis that we have indicated, proves, as far as it goes, the difference proclaimed by the Bible between a general revelation of God and a special unique revelation of God in Christ. That distinction is corroborated by history and facts. We find there a marked difference of basal types. I have considered these questions thoroughly in several books. Here I may be allowed to emphasize this first point and to add another feature, still more fundamental.

The first and last originality and uniqueness of Christianity consists in this, that unique and absolute truth has in Christianity the form not of a rule, a law, Dharma, nor of ideas or theologies; Christian revelation has the form of a *man*. God reveals himself in a human life. In Buddhism Gotama Buddha, the Revealer, reveals the truth about suffering; he reveals a rule or doctrine, Dharma, and the result is an order of monks, the Samgha. In Christianity Christ reveals not a doctrine, but his own heavenly Father. The result is the Church, the universal supernatural fellowship, in which the Spirit conveys the forgiveness of sins and eternal life through the means of grace, the Word in Scripture, teaching, tradition, sacraments, &c. Therefore the trinities are different in those two religions. Dharma, Buddha, Samgha; and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, acting in the Church.

In the Roman Empire (and in India, where the most

¹ *Transactions of Third Intern. Congress of the History of Religions*, i, p. 295.

² Koran, Sura, ii. 172.

wonderful conception of the Divine outside biblical revelation is to be found, I mean Bhakti, love and devotion to a personal lord, Ishvara) the chief thing in religion is not a doctrine, a rule, a philosophy, a theology, dogmas, but *personality*, a person near to man, a being appearing on earth.

The need of bringing the deity nearer to man found crude expression in the hymn which the Athenians, according to Athenaeus, sang to the honour of Demetrius Poliorketes when, in the year 307 B.C., he delivered the city which had been subjugated by Cassander on behalf of King Ptolemy, and, after an interregnum of fifteen years, restored the democratic constitution. 'Son of the almighty Poseidon and Aphrodite, hail! The other gods are far away or else they have no ears, or they do not exist or they do not care for us, but thou art present and we see thee. Thou art neither of wood nor marble, thou art a true god.'¹ Both Antigonus and Demetrius were declared to be saviour-gods—*θεοὶ σωτῆρες*—and a special priest was appointed for their cult.

Plutarch and Athenaeus relate yet more abominable things about the emulation shown by the liberty-loving Athenians in overwhelming father and son with divine honours. Even for Demetrius this flattery was too strong. The frivolous writer of this hymn was evidently not impelled by any religious feelings, but by the ambition of a servile soul to break the record for strong words and expressions. Still his language about the present and living deity can be taken to explain a considerable part of the religious history of late antiquity and of the imperial period. Everywhere there was a longing for an *ἐπιφανὴς θεός* a revealed, present, and living deity, and people were inclined to see him in mighty and noteworthy *men*.

In ancient Egypt the Pharaoh had been regarded as the son and representative of the god Re. Here we recognize the higher civilization's later transformation of the divine personality of the primitive medicine-man and chief. To popular Egyptian conception Pharaoh was a living god. The religious position of Babylonian-Assyrian princes presents analogies, even if they are more faint. When, in the Hellen-

¹ Athenaeus vi. 253.

istic age, Alexander broke through the bounds set to humanity, and reverence for the ancient gods and the distance between God and man were diminished, in Greece flattering orators and cities whether delivered or conquered began to heap upon generals divine titles and honours. Ptolemies and Seleucids organized an actual conqueror-cult, in which the old name of σωτήρ, saviour, helper, which in the ancient Greek religion had been given to certain gods and, in the feminine form of σώτειρα, to a number of goddesses, was largely employed. According to Irenaeus Soter was used as an independent name of God among the Valentinians.¹

Later on, Soter became a common title in the cult of the Emperor, being sometimes exalted, as in the case of Trajan, to 'saviour and benefactor of the whole world'. No one, however, was raised so high as Augustus, who was actually called Zeus. Nor did any emperor come so near to deserving the title of saviour. Thus there was no lack of 'saviours' in the world when Christianity appeared.

Deification and the title of saviour were not, however, limited to founders of cities, generals, statesmen, and princes. We also know a class of human saviours who in a way come nearer to the Saviour of the Gospel. We do not lay any decisive stress in this connexion on the word *soter* itself: we are concerned with the thing. Religious reverence, with altars and cult, had been paid of old to men of religion. And in this well-ploughed psychological soil such emotions grew more luxuriant. Among a host of examples I choose two, which are particularly typical and significant, Epicurus and Apollonius of Tyana. But they were by no means the first to acquire divine honour in historical times. To be complete a beginning should be made with Pythagoras.

In Christianity, which here too was akin to and heir of the Stoa, Epicurus got a bad name because he made pleasure or absence of pain the principle of ethics. He has, however, a twofold positive significance in the history of religion. (1) He introduced that love of God which asks for no reward, disinterested love. For his gods neither could nor would do anything; they were ideals of beauty and bliss,

¹ Irenaeus i. 7. 1.

for contemplation and imitation. (2) What we are here concerned with is the charm exercised by his personality and teaching. The relations of men towards him became religious. He was worshipped even before his death. His teaching was regarded as a release from oppressive prejudices. It favoured a carefree turning away from the business of life and a joyful fellowship in common interests and friendship. But this happy feeling is not sufficient to account for the homage which united Epicureans in a close brotherhood, and which admiring pupils in quite late times bestowed upon the master and in certain cases still bestow upon him. We must take the peculiar power of his personality into account.

In Apollonius of Tyana in Cappadocia we find a contemporary of Christ in a stricter sense than the 'saviour' and 'god' Augustus was. It is not unlikely that this pious teacher and enlightened miracle-worker was born about 4 B.C., i.e. soon after Jesus or contemporaneously with him. The people called him a son of Zeus. The Egyptian god Proteus is said to have foretold to his mother that he would be incarnated in Apollonius. The circumstances at his birth are described in a manner which reminds us of the story of Buddha's birth. He was born in a meadow, and swans were singing when he came into the world. As the biography mentions India and shows a fair acquaintance with Indian matters, the idea of Indian influence is not altogether improbable. The lives of Christ and Apollonius display also certain similarities. Several *logia* and biographies of the master were current before Philostratus about the year 200, chiefly from the chronicles of the faithful Assyrian disciple Damis, and at the request of the Empress Julia Domna, wrote the flowery account which we still possess. Apollonius healed the sick and at Rome raised to life a high-born maiden, who was being carried to the grave. He disappeared from people's sight, but manifested himself to two disciples at Putcoli—perhaps the writer has here received an impression from the Gospels. The accusation brought against him at Rome asserted amongst other things that he had allowed himself to be called God, but this appears to belong to those parts of Philostratus' works which are with reason suspected. We

are ignorant of the circumstances of his death. There are three accounts. It has been supposed that he died at a great age in the reign of Nerva. Professor Hempel, who has made an analysis of the works of Philostratus and their sources,¹ considers it probable that Apollonius really was condemned and executed at Rome under Domitian. There can be no doubt as to the nobility of his character. It has the testimony of Church Fathers as well as Neoplatonists. In Greece his disciples called themselves Apollonians. Among the monuments to his honour may be mentioned the temple which the Emperor Aurelian after the year 270 caused to be erected to him in consequence of a vision which he had during the siege of Tyana.

Apollonius has been made use of as a foil to Christ by Hierocles, the friend of Diocletian and proconsul of Bithynia at the beginning of the fourth century, by Charles Blount at the end of the seventeenth century, and by many others.

Like St. Paul, his greater contemporary in Asia Minor, Apollonius was the object of a lawsuit, and was put into prison, where he had to stay for two years. We know as little of the issue of the trial in the case of Apollonius as in that of St. Paul (Philostratus viii. 15).

The episode in Ephesus, related by Philostratus (iv. 10), when Apollonius cured an epidemic, was referred to in the lawsuit. He was accused of having received divine worship. An officer asked him scornfully why he was accused (vii. 21). When Apollonius answered that he did not know, the other declared:

“Well I can tell you: for it is allowing yourself to be worshipped by your fellow men that has led you to be accused of setting yourself on a level with the gods.” “And who is it”, asked the other, “that has paid me this worship?”—“I myself,” said the other, “when I was still a boy in Ephesus, at a time when you stayed our epidemic.”—“Lucky it was both for you”, said Apollonius, “and for the city of Ephesus that was saved.”

Here at least we seem to have an evident declaration by Apollonius himself, even if it was contrary to his self-knowledge and personal dignity to let the homage paid to himself

¹ Johannes Hempel, *Apollonius von Tyana*.

go too far. He was aware that he through his communion with the divinity commanded supernatural powers, but they obeyed the laws of moral life. One must be good in order to pray to the gods successfully (i. 12).

Apollonius at any rate gave his contemporaries the impression of being in near communion with the divinity and of standing above human limitations. To ancient conceptions the step was not then very long to real divine homage. Both friends and enemies saw something supernatural in him. Damis indicated their mutual relation with the words: 'Let us depart, Apollonius, you following God, and I you' (i. 19). When he was told that Apollonius understood all human languages and, what is more, even the secrets of human silence, it is related that 'he worshipped him and regarded him as a daemon' (i. 19).

It is thus not unlikely that Apollonius had temples to his honour earlier than Christ. His fame, however, cannot have been so exceedingly great, for then he would surely have been exploited by Celsus in his writing, *Alethes Logos*, against the Christians, which was composed shortly before A.D. 180. In this polemical writing also other rivals of the Saviour Christ are brought forward who, in the author's opinion, contradicted his religious authority and worship. Celsus asks what those shall do who are in earnest about their salvation, if others put forward a different person as the Christ and exhort them to believe in him if they wish to be saved. Shall they cast the dice? In his answer Origen gives, as an example, Simon Magus of Samaria in Acts viii. 9 sq., who called himself 'the power of God', and Dositheus, likewise of Samaria, who actually called himself the Son of God, and Judas of Galilee and Theudas before him.¹ We learn more of such men from Celsus in the book of Origen.

'There are many', he says, 'who although of no name, with the greatest facility and on the slightest occasion, whether within or without temples, assume the motions and gestures of inspired persons; while others do it in cities or among armies, for the purpose of attracting attention and exciting surprise. These are

¹ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, vi. 11.

accustomed to say, each for himself, "I am God; I am the Son of God; or, I am the Divine Spirit".¹

So much about human saviours in antiquity. We need not prove that *they* could not successfully claim to rival the Man in the Gospel.

The names of the divine mythical saviours have been collected in easily accessible form by Cumont, Toutain, Legge, Glover, &c. How about those divinities, who became dear to thousands in the Roman Empire during the first centuries of the Church?

The first of the eastern invaders, Cybele, the Queen of the high mountains, drawn by lions, had come from Asia Minor to Rome, during the second Punic War. She was certainly accompanied by her lover Attis, although we do not hear of him until later on in Rome.

From the second century B.C. the cult of Isis gained a footing in Italy but was persecuted at Rome, till Caligula built a temple to her on the Campus Martius. Afterwards this cult spread as far as the bounds of the Roman dominion. Isis was accompanied by the Hellenized Serapis who, under the Ptolemies, received a magnificent temple at Alexandria and who, there and in other temples, healed those who had been 'possessed' by the god, probably in nocturnal sleep, as in the temples of Aesclepius. The priests formed an established hierarchy and a splendid and effective divine service was celebrated every day with the singing of hymns and ceremonies, reminiscent of the Egyptian ones.

In Carthage the name of *Mithra* has been found from the time before the Roman conquest. But the real entrance of the Persian god into the Empire occurred later. During the wars with Mithridates in the last century before Christ, the Roman soldiers had made acquaintance with Mithra, who had already absorbed elements of the Babylonian astral system. Under the Severi in the third century the Mithra worshippers rivalled the Christians in number. And in the fourth century that religion still cherished the hope of assimilating to itself all divinities and of becoming with the help of philosophy and the state the official and dominant

¹ Ibid. vii. 9.

worship in the empire. In 307 Diocletian—in other respects also a promoter of Persian customs and doctrines apt to glorify his imperial dignity—and his co-regents dedicated a temple to Mithra as *fautori imperii sui*, supporter of their empire, at a meeting in Carnuntum, near Pressburg, Bratislava, by the Danube. And Julian the Apostate believed that, in consequence of his secret initiation into Persian mysteries in his youth, he stood under Mithra's special protection.

The cunning and energetic Syrian farmers, servants, and merchants, who immigrated into Italy and the provinces, brought with them their gods, Adonis and different kinds of Baal. Of these one Baal from Doliche, a small place in Commagene in northern Syria, Juppiter Dolichenus, almost rivalled Mithra in the extent of his cult. Another from Emesa was unexpectedly exalted when one of his priests, a boy of fourteen years, was proclaimed Emperor and attempted to make a stone fetish from Emesa supreme god under the name of *Sol invictus Elagabal*. This Heliogabalus was ill-fitted for a religious revival and failed miserably. But the inevitable prevalence of the sun in natural religion vindicated itself. It was thoroughly prepared for by the learned theories of the planets, their movements and influence on mind and body, penetratingly analysed by Cumont, which had gained ground in Rome especially through the Syrian Stoic Posidonius about 100 B.C., whose importance was formerly overlooked but is now overestimated.

These cults in no wise exclude one another, in contrast with Judaism and Christianity. Further, they were quite consistent with one or another of the philosophical schools.

The oriental cults contained a *cult-legend* which distinguishes them as much from the dry pedantry of Roman rites as from the unconcerned Olympians of Greece. The cult-legend is not about the supreme God, but about a divinity who has lived and worked on earth. His action and suffering is a mystery to which nothing but consecration gives admission. The cult-legend has a moving, dramatic content, which fills the soul with fear and hope, sorrow and exultation — a stronger dose of the psychological effect of the Eleusinian mysteries and the ennobled religion of Dionysus.

Thus the element of pathos in these figures was their earthly life. The Roman Empire, however, never knew nearly as much about its modern 'saving gods' as the more imaginative and religious Indians could tell about their most popular heroes and gods, Krishna, Rama, and others, who had wandered and worked on earth. The lives of Tammuz, Adonis, Osiris, Attis were concentrated mainly in their death, which the worshippers lamented.

The practical aim of the rites and the doctrine was salvation, a salvation which reached beyond death. Men had lost confidence in their own power and were driven to a vain longing for supernatural help. The *Weltschmerz* was ravaging, either seriously felt or as a fashionable infection. And now the oriental cult-legends promised consolation, aid, and eternal life. *Σωτηρία*, *soteria* has an eminently religious signification, salvation not from delusion, but from sin and death, above all from death.

That these gods were living saviours who had once appeared on earth involved something, the importance of which cannot be overrated, I mean the *imitation of the divinity*. That very idea was impossible in relation to the old Olympians and the State gods of Rome. The former in the myths did not behave in a very exemplary way. Of the latter men knew too little. A divinity who is to be imitated belongs to another level of religious history. The new mystery-saviours are protectors and examples in one person.

Before this confusing multitude of saviour gods, hero-cults, and divine men the historian must ask himself: Why did the Saviour of the Gospel gain an incomparably greater historical importance than all the other saviours of antiquity? The historian, as such, neither regrets nor rates highly this fact, but he must try to explain it scientifically. I give three answers.

1. In the first place we mention the Israelitic-Jewish tradition and the Bible with its monotheistic exclusiveness and the overpowering experience of the zeal of God.

2. Further, the secret lies in the personal character of Jesus Christ and his supreme religious power. What gave an incomparable advantage to the Christ-religion was not only

his dramatic and pathetic death, but above all the quality and strength of the personal gifts that distinguished Jesus of Nazareth from all others.

3. The importance of our Saviour's historical reality for this problem has already been indicated. The Mediterranean world knew of dead and risen heroes and saviours, and it became more familiar with them as the mystery cults grew during the first centuries. Men knew of Heracles, Attis, Adonis, Osiris, Mithra, that they had lived on earth, and their works were praised in the worship. But they were only gods or legendary heroes. Jesus Christ had lived and died recently. "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled... declare we unto you."¹ Christ was a near Person of history, as were none of his rivals. In spite of the tolerance of the priests of Mithra and their prudent policy as regards the emperor-cult, and in spite of the passionate character of the worship of Attis, these heroes and helpers were nothing but gods. According to Lucian, it was said in Hierapolis that the story of Adonis and the boar that killed him described an occurrence in those parts. But nobody who was serious or had any knowledge could believe that the tender lover of the great goddess was an historical personality. Moreover, in Jerusalem the sites of the Passion were known. That Passion was no ritual myth or cult-legend, composed to explain certain sacred rites, but belonged to history. It is significant that the celebration of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday was the oldest part of Holy Week and that the other memories gradually grouped themselves in the liturgy around the Supper. It is moving to read in the oldest preserved form of worship from Jerusalem,² of the fourth century, about the stations on the Mount of Olives and in Gethsemane during the night between Thursday and Friday—*ac sic ergo cum ceperit esse pullorum cantus, descenditur de Imbomon cum ymnis et accedit eodem loco ubi oravit Dominus, sicut scriptum est in evangelio*—and about the return to Jerusalem.³

¹ Ἀπὸ τῆς χθελσινῆς νυκτὸς τοῦ Μυστικοῦ Δείπνου, ἡρξάτο

¹ 1 John i. 1.

² Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, pp. 490 sqq.

³ Duchesne, *op. cit.*, p. 508.

ἐξελισσόμενη ἡ θεία Τραγωδία ἥτις παρασκευάζει τὴν κάθαρσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν. I read these words on Good Friday 1911 in one of the political newspapers of Athens, which contained daily articles about what they called 'the divine drama'. So popular are the Greek-Orthodox Church and her sacred rites. 'With the mystical meal last night the divine tragedy is commencing, which brings purification from sins.' The Greek language is suggestive of the origin of Christianity. 'This very commonplace sentence by some obscure Athenian journalist reminds us at once of Christianity's connexion with, and of its difference from, the religious world of Hellenic civilization. 'The mystical meal' brings to mind the mystery-rites as they have been performed from time immemorial down to the sacramental cults of the times of the Roman Empire. But the difference is as striking: this 'mystical meal' originates from a real supper one Thursday night in Jerusalem, at which a human soul was pregnant with the mystery of suffering and called to sound its depths. Or take the expression, 'the divine tragedy'. 'Tragedy' had probably once meant the mournful hymn which was sung by the worshippers of the animal-god Dionysus, dressed in buckskins. Later, it denoted dramas where behind the uniformity of the mask the rigidity of the cult-legends and the sufferings and death of the heroes were softened and filled with human feeling. Also here is a tragedy, but the one who suffers is not a hero of myth or fiction; a cross has indeed been planted in the soil of history. Watching the tragedy works purification, as Aristotle knew already. He probably meant in the ancient sense purification *from* affections and feelings, but with Lessing we translate it in a modern and Christian way: purification *of* the affect. The Passion of Christ stands out to Christian faith as a purifying world-fact, which has transformed the spiritual state of man. These three Greek terms, taken at random from a newspaper article: mystical meal, tragedy, purification, range the Christian Passion-rites with the mystery cults, but at the same time separate them from these through the pathos of history.

Jean Jacques Rousseau was right in stating that we know

much more definite facts about Jesus than about Socrates. Even some would-be scholars have amused themselves with the supposition, even with the pretended proof, that Jesus never existed. We must agree that it is most incredible, one might say impossible, that such a man should have existed and that such things should have happened. But it belongs to the enigma of existence that things which can be proved to be impossible take the liberty of occurring. Professor Okuri in Japan proved some twenty years ago that Bismarck never existed, but was nothing less than the god Thor.¹ No person of antiquity is so well known as Jesus of Nazareth. Few important days of the old times are as well known as the day when Jesus went over the lake with his disciples for rest; he found the perspiring crowd that had run to meet him, and asked the wearied and angry disciples to get the people something to eat; disappointed as they were because anxious to enjoy the blessed company of the Master alone, he sent them away; then he dismissed the crowd and was alone with God. But, indeed, another day in his life is beyond all comparison more completely and lucidly apparent than any other day of ancient history. I mean Good Friday. The discussion is still going on whether it was, according to St. John, the fourteenth of Nisan, which to my view is correct, or according to the Synoptics, who have confused the Last Supper with the ordinary paschal meal, on the fifteenth of Nisan. But the happenings are told accurately as in the minutes of a process from the evening in the Upper Room till the Sepulture. On Good Friday the first service in the Cathedral of Upsala is a quiet Holy Communion at six o'clock in the morning to the commemoration of 'Christ before the Sanhedrin'. The next service, at nine o'clock, commemorates his appearance before Pontius Pilate. The long High Mass at eleven dwells upon the fifth act of the Passion of Our Lord, i.e. his crucifixion. And at about the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, and when he had cried again with a loud voice, he gave up the Ghost. At that very hour at three o'clock his death is commemorated with the 'Reproaches', *Improperia*. At six o'clock in the evening the

¹ *Le Chrétien Français*, 10 June 1910.

fifth service of the day contemplates his burial. At nine o'clock at night the congregation, listening to what I have called the fifth Gospel, namely, the Passion music of Johann Sebastian Bach and other evangeelic interpreters in music of the mystery of the Redemption, meditates the terrible and grand day of human history and of this universe.

It is incredible, but beautiful not only to the worshippers but to every mind with any historical imagination, that Easter was fixed nearly two thousand years ago in the Church in a way that really keeps the old lunar year, according to the festival-calendar of Israel. The full moon still shines over Good Friday night, as it did over the walk of the disciples with the Master from the Upper Room to Gethsemane. Therefore I am obdurate enough not to want any change in the date of Easter.

We mentioned in the lecture on Buddha's vow as a 'salvation-fact' the natural tendency to deliver religious certitude from its dependence on something belonging to history. Because history is a course of relativities, Faith demands the absolute. Let me draw attention here to a significant page in the history of Christian liturgy.

What Good Friday is for evangeelic faith, the *festum corporis Christi*, *Fête de Dieu*, *Corpus Christi*, instituted in the thirteenth century, is for Roman Christianity. It celebrates and worships not the Man on the Cross, but the consecrated wafer, a most characteristic witness to the difference between evangeelic and Roman conception, since the character of Christian and religious faith reveals itself most strikingly in liturgical rules and customs. In Hessen in Germany the two great denominations have made a bargain. The evangeelic people keep quiet on *Fronleichnamstag*, on the Thursday after Trinity, and the Roman people observe Good Friday as a day of rest. The observance of Good Friday as the greatest day of the year is faithful to the unique character of Christianity as revelation in history. The substitution of the *Fête de Dieu* means a timeless worship of the divinity created or made visible by the consecration of the priest.

The historic person of Christ, claiming to be, and recognized and worshipped as the full revelation of God on earth,

is unique, not only from the point of view of values, when we compare his dignity and greatness with other revealers, but, if I except some insignificant imitators, he is unique also in fact as a type. No man, worthy of comparison, ever made such claims. The only men whom one might compare with him because of their historic importance, namely, Buddha, Kong-fu-tse, Mohammed, never made any similar claim; on the contrary, they rejected all tendencies to make such in their followers.

It may seem still more incredible from a general point of view, but it is thus an historical fact, that the *claim* of uniqueness, of absolute truth, itself belongs to the originality of the Biblical revelation. The claim was inherited from Judaism, the mother, from whose bosom the new dispensation issued. We do not find anywhere in the great religions that claim of being unique which characterizes authentic Christianity from the very beginning. Islam is no exception, in so far as it is not an original creation, but an 'epigon' of the Biblical religions. Other great religions are not only tolerant, they are eclectic in principle, if not in fact, especially where national pride does not exploit them. It is possible for them to place Christ somewhere amongst the great relativities of their faith. Against all such ideas Christianity sets its own absolute truth.

II

My second point is this. In seeking for God, man has formed diverse conceptions about the Divine. Evolution and civilization have developed and purified those conceptions and made them more congruous with the cravings of higher human intellect and loftier inspirations.

But here the history of religions has a *crucial point*.

What is more likely to awaken doubts about the love of God and the meaning of life than the cruel horror of this, that a child who babbles on its mother's arm can become a murderer, a monster in human shape, a victim of vice and darkness, full of hatred, a curse to himself and others, so that society must defend itself against him and punish him?

But a second thing is just as dangerous to faith in God and

in the meaning of life: men, human society, have devised the most hideous pains in order to punish those who have become the scum of mankind, the prodigal sons and daughters of society. No more cruel instrument of torture has been invented than the cross. Roman imagination made the invention, which became highly appreciated and frequently used amongst the untold inventions of civilization.

The absurdity went as far as this: the only one, who was without reproach and who ought thus to have escaped punishment, was struck down with the worst punishment. But he changed the situation. The normal thinking of all peoples and languages has said during thousands of years: misery, disaster, illness, defeat, affliction, pain, martyrdom, untimely or violent death signify the displeasure of the divinity and the guilt of men. The unsatisfactoriness and injustice of such a conclusion was here as nowhere else violently demonstrated. More than one of those who had penetrated more deeply into the event, and who have been bound to pay for a fresh gleam of insight with their own flesh and blood, had brooded and doubted and surmised perhaps as in a flash, a radical lack of sense in that time-honoured interpretation and perhaps another deeper meaning. The author of the seventy-third Psalm clutched God, as we have seen, clasped him in spite of affliction, even felt himself more intimately united with his God through suffering. External experiences became secondary, heaven, earth, and hell became secondary, in comparison with communion with God. The author of Job arrived also at a novel and humiliating conception of the impudence and insufficiency of human thought, and bowed down in the dust before the inscrutable majesty of God. Now on Golgotha this prophecy was fulfilled. The usual explanation, due to causal law and general experience, became bankrupt. The question arose: What changed the situation? An investigation of the Crucified, his words, his life, the reason for his punishment, his friends, his aim make the answer obvious. The reason was his Love. Thus Love is a power, when it sacrifices itself heroically. The same truth is proved in the history of the Christian communion after the crucifixion. Still more, a higher agency revealed itself in this love. The

divine love entered the history of mankind and transformed the bitter meaninglessness of existence.

The love of God treated the matter in a summary way. It did not stop at strong, stirring and corrective words, or at tender consoling and guiding words of prophets and Saviour and apostles. It undertook what is more than words, namely, an action, a deed, an event, a fact of history.

Amongst the victims of crucifixion, amongst the scum of mankind, whom society in Church and State and pious communities are bound to repel by force, is one who has changed the most shameful and painful of all punishments into the highest symbol and triumphant token of mankind, into a revelation of the perfection of human faithfulness and divine love.

If man would prove that there is a God, he would do anything rather than crucify his Revealer. The cross became God's method for proving his love, which did not shrink back from anything, but recklessly used the most effective means.

A single right action is worth more than all thoughts and all words. We go about thinking many good things; thought has many possibilities; what is one *not* going to do? But when the moment of action arrives, out of all the possibilities which played in our minds and warmed our hearts we have to choose one single thing and do it. One single unselfish act is worth more than all friendly and great words. One single act of kindness is worth more than all warm thoughts; one single act of self-sacrifice means more than the most ardent assurances. How poor is often the result when one passes from words to deeds! How unreliable are words, how powerless are thoughts! It is worst of all with ourselves, when, after all our ardour and good thoughts, we have to act and stand undecided as to what must be done.

How heavenly-secure is our feeling towards one who has shown us his goodwill and his faithfulness in deeds! How we are helped in life, when we know that 'he is a reliable friend in need; to him I can turn with confidence'. How different it is with those people whose kindness (in words) knows no bounds! When it is a question of one little real action (I mean something more than an action dictated by the good

impulse of the moment, or an action not supported by the general sentiment)—when a real action is called for from such people—I am either very uncertain how it will be, or else very certain that the friendly person will never perform it. A word means something only when it comes from a person who does something. But there are words which *are* actions, words which demand such a decision, words in which there lies so much courage, so much of the dearest treasure of the soul, that they are deeds, not words. One who has done an action has stepped out of possibilities into realities.

Acts are of greater value than words for him also who performs them. For every act into which I throw myself, into which I am not dragged by impulse or blind necessity, contributes to make something of me. He who acts, and not merely sits and looks on, gets a different insight into life. That which on the lips and in the minds of others is quite ordinary and meaningless in the everyday circumstances of life becomes, for those who take life seriously, greater and more beautiful than the creations of fancy. The best man is the man who entirely forgets himself in his task. Perhaps he is also at bottom the happiest, even if it looks black for him.

But greater than action is suffering: not the lifeless suffering to which we submit, but living voluntary suffering--both for him who suffers, and for him for whom the suffering is borne; the suffering possesses a still higher value than action. For suffering carries on and perfects action, after the hand has lost its strength. Suffering unites more than acts can do. 'If I may not serve thee, if I may not suffer for thee, thou hast no part in me.' Suffering seals the bonds of nature between mother and child, between husband and wife. Suffering creates new bonds; and suffering purifies; it means a still sterner purification and decision than action. The love which builds us up into a living edifice makes use of suffering to bind the stones together well and firmly; it uses first the sacred blood of Christ.

The central thing in Christianity is the most awful thing on earth. The most degrading and cruel instrument for punishing the worst of criminals. To-day the cross conveys to us no idea about that fact, since it has been transformed by Jesus of

Nazareth, like so many other words, such as Pharisee, publican, Samaritan, &c., the sense of which he has transformed in the mind of men in a sovereign way. We may substitute the word gallows. Somebody has written a book about Christ, calling him 'The man they hanged'. Nothing can be more repugnant to human civilized thought and taste. When St. Paul says: 'But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness,'¹ we can generalize and say that such a barbarous idea, or still more such a fact, is scandalous to any human civilized conception.

How are we to explain the fact that Christianity, generally considered as the highest religion, introduces the hideous spectacle of the cross, abhorrent to every civilized taste? I think that the answer is obvious. Men had been seeking for God. The cross is the strongest testimony that *God has been seeking man*. God's way is as non-human as possible. But it is no mere idea; it is an historic fact which has proved to be stronger than any other fact or conception in Religion. We must acknowledge the truth of St. Paul's observation: 'Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men.'² God grasped at humanity in order to lift it to his fatherly bosom. His hand was grievously wounded, but he succeeded.

Not only souls and lives of men were depraved and infected by evil, but also human society, even the sacral religious institution was infected by the irrational and complicated influence of falsehood and unrighteousness to such an extent that the divine messenger, God himself, desirous to grasp and save humanity, must be condemned by the combined action of ordinary men and ordinary institutions. Thus the cross has a double meaning: (1) The evil in an incredible way hidden in hearts and conditions, in individual and collective interests and establishments, was unmasked and made apparent in its horrifying and ruinous destruction, so that man, rudely awakened, must face reality and hate sin and evil. (2) Healthy uncompromising action springs directly from God's mercy. God took the fate and salvation of men so seriously, that he used the most precious life in

¹ 1 Cor. i. 23.

² 1 Cor. i. 25.

history in order to reveal the hideous bane of evil and his own unlimited divine love.

A closer examination of the history of Religions shows us many hints of the significance of suffering in the divine purpose for humanity, down from the wailing hymns sung to Tammuz three thousand years or more before Christ. But the cross on Golgotha does not belong to liturgy or to thought. It is a woful fact in human history. Because evil is no mere idea, it is a still more woful fact. God is operating according to other mathematical and strategical ways than ours.

Religion has fellowship with God, the spiritual, the eternal. It is irrational and incalculable and incomprehensible that these destinies of mankind, which are neither spiritual nor eternal, but subject to the law of the relativity of history, in certain quarters and particularly in the Biblical revelation, have acquired a definite significance for the salvation and bliss of mankind. Contradictory as it seems, it is a fact. And in the whole history of religion there is according to the Biblical and Christian view nothing which more obviously proves a divine activity than those phenomena, events, and persons, and above all that Person which, amid the changes and chances of life and the strivings of man, have manifestly been the works of God. God visits man not only in the quiet devotion of the soul and in the communion of the human Spirit, but strangely enough, and with the rudest directness, in that history which all can see with their own eyes.

St. Paul speaks of this in 1 Cor. i. 21-3: 'For seeing that, in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe. Seeing that Jews ask for signs and Gentiles seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling-block and unto Gentiles foolishness.' The passage is very often quoted. Christian revelation here declares, how its inner principle differs from Hellenic thought, but also, remarkably enough, from the Jewish conception of religion. The history of Israel contains a divine revelation, but the Jews demanded signs.

And the sign given to them—the Cross on Golgotha—was a terrible 'offence', an inducement to doubt and deny rather than to believe, as it seemed, in spite of the fact that in the Psalter, in Deutero-Isaiah, and elsewhere, hints had been given of a revelation of God in a form, apparently, of human shame and degradation.

How is the passage in 1 Cor. i. 21 to be interpreted? 'The world knew not God.' So far the matter is clear; the way in which the world tried in vain to serve God, is called wisdom. The world cannot know God through wisdom, by its own wisdom, reason, and thought. The first words of the passage remain, ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, 'in the wisdom of God'. Two interpretations are possible. 'In God's wisdom' can mean that it happened according to the wisdom of God. In his wisdom God willed that the world should not come to a right knowledge of God by the path of wisdom. The whole passage would then mean: 'Since in the wisdom of God, i.e. in the wise counsel and ordinance of God, the world did not know God by its own wisdom.' But another interpretation is possible. Divine wisdom was not available for the world. The world knew not God by its wisdom. For it did not possess and consequently could not employ the wisdom of God, the viewpoint of God. And since the world cannot by *wisdom* know God, 'it pleased God' by that which is the opposite of wisdom, viz. by foolishness, by that which to the world must be foolish and offensive, 'to save them that believe'. In what does this foolishness consist—this offensiveness which is the opposite of what men call wisdom? The answer is: It consists in the message, κήρυγμα. 'By the foolishness of the preaching,' salvation has thus been accomplished. What message? What preaching? St. Paul says it immediately afterwards: 'We preach Christ crucified,' preach, κηρύσσομεν. This is the saving message, in contrast to the sign of the Jews and the wisdom of the Hellenes. The message does not deal with any thought or idea, any inner experience or doctrine concerning the nature of God or the nature of man, nothing of all that, which in all ages has been the study and aspiration of the highest and deepest spirits of religion. This message deals with something that happened in a corner of the world

at a certain point of history. Christ was punished as an infamous criminal. No wonder that this is 'a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles'. St. Paul is not here dealing with a speculation, but referring to a fact of experience. This which happened in history, in the outer world and before the eyes of all men, and was rejected as a scandal and foolishness, this has become to the Jews and Gentiles who listen to the call, 'the power of God and the wisdom of God'. This crucified Saviour seemed to be weak and doomed to destruction, but manifested himself as the power of God. This crucified, tortured man was sure to appear foolish to the wisdom and intellect of Greece. True, the Greeks had had glimpses in Aeschylus and Plato of the suffering, 'offence', and foolishness in the eyes of the world of the righteous and God-fearing man, who lives and works in accordance with the commandments of God. Broadly speaking, however, the crucifixion is the opposite of all that wisdom and intellect have been able to imagine concerning the divine. But this foolishness, this crucified Christ, 'is proved to be the 'wisdom of God'. Here God has made himself known not only in his usual manner, in the thoughts of men, in their fellowship with God and in their spirit, but here God has come forward, if we may say so, from his anonymity, from the secret places, and revealed himself to the world. So it was demonstrated, that the power and wisdom of God can never be calculated upon beforehand. They prove their truth to every one who is fully sincere¹—'by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God'. In reality the apostle is not here expounding something which is absolutely and of its own nature foolish. There is a divine wisdom, which surpasses human wisdom, as the heaven is high above the earth. Moreover, the apostle is speaking wisdom and not folly.² A wisdom which is not of this age nor of this transitory world, but the wisdom of God, a mystery, a secret. St. Paul expresses the matter in a paradoxical antithesis in 1 Cor. i. 25: 'The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.' He has here the same

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 2.

² 1 Cor. ii. 6.

two points of view, viz. strength—weakness, after the judgement of the Jews, and wisdom—folly, after the judgement of the Hellenes, the philosophers. In this verse the order is reversed, but the thought is the same. 'The foolish from God is wiser than men, and the weak from God is stronger than men.'

In religion and in Christianity there is a dividing line, not only between a lower and a higher, but also between essentially different forms of piety and communion with the divine. On one side, timeless mysticism, on the other, the historical, the decisive, the very fact, the saving fact. Communion with God in all its intimacy, in the secret prayer in the chamber, and in the mystery of the soul, never ceases to build on what once happened in history, when God had to deny all human ideas of strength and all human ideas of what is wise and reasonable. It happened and it had to happen. Why? Because, answers the apostle, the princes of this world were hardened. Had they known the eternal, hidden wisdom of God, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. The sublime quotation from Isaiah lxiv. 3 in 1 Cor. ii. 9 about things which 'eye hath not seen nor ear heard' is usually applied to the ineffable bliss of heaven. There is also added: 'which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' But the exegesis is faulty. That most wonderful thing, according to the apostle, is not the future glory about which he also could speak in sublime words: 'I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.'¹ 'For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'²

The most wonderful thing, that which marks the true borderline in the onward march of religion and the race, that which cleaves higher religion into two types in spite of all spiritual kinship, is that inconceivable event, which had

¹ Rom. viii. 18-19.

² 2 Cor. v. 1.

the appearance of weakness and foolishness, but which has proved itself the revelation of revelations on our earth of divine power and divine wisdom.

Those two points, the uniqueness of Christ as the historical revealer, as the Word made flesh, and the mystery of Calvary, show on the analysis of the world's religion an essentially unique character in Christianity. If we may for a moment foolishly leave aside nuances, we may say: it is not the work of man seeking God, but the work of God seeking man.

X

CONTINUED REVELATION

DOES God continue to reveal himself to mankind? A little boy is reading his lesson in Bible history: 'And God said unto Moses.' His critical younger brother, who has not yet begun to go to school: 'What a stupid you are! God can't speak in that way to a man.' 'Shut up, he could in those days.' Does not theology reason much in the same way?

In certain later writings of the Old Testament and in Judaism piety no longer discerns the action of God in the present history and its personalities—with less difficulty, it is true, in his wise and great works in nature—but, as regards history, only in the ancient wonders of revelation. Through the position of Christ in the communion of Christians with God Christianity finds itself in another situation in regard to its belief in revelation. But a certain likeness exists, *mutatis mutandis*, between this Judaism, which was able to keep its certainty of a revelation apparent mainly in times long past, and the average Protestant conception, according to which the revelation of God was completed in ancient times and completely written in the sacred book.

Some Christians say: 'God did reveal himself once. We have it all written down. He is in the Holy Scriptures.' This contains part of the essential truth. God did reveal himself once for all in Jesus Christ, and that Revelation needs no repeating or improving. Jesus says about the Holy Ghost:¹ 'He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you.' Christ who suffered under Pontius Pilate, the Christ of history and of faith, suffices for all time. The history related in the Bible is God's Revelation in a fuller, richer, weightier sense than in any other history. The uniqueness of God's Revelation in the history recorded in the Bible seems impossible and unlikely to reasoning *a priori*, but still it is a fact, which comparative religion will make more and more

¹ John xvi. 15.

evident.¹ One can prove that a thing is impossible, and yet it really happens in history and in the moral life.

For history has not been laid down according to the laws of logic. What is to be found there might be very absurd; one would say in advance that it is unthinkable. But still it has happened. It is a material for research, which here as elsewhere, in order to reach real results, has to put itself in subordination to its subject, listening, receiving, explaining, not above its subject in lordly wise. In the history of religion a supernatural life is revealed, but not in a way which seems just and right to human thought. The real aspect of the history of religion corresponds to St. Paul's words of a universal revelation, inside which we can discern the special revelation. Or, to use an expression without metaphysical meaning, in the religion of mankind phenomena appear, which, as Hermann Usener saw, in a specific way deserve the name of 'religion of revelation'.

But that it is absurd to look upon God's Revelation as finished with Christ or the Bible, is clearly shown by another question. Our question: 'Does God continue to reveal himself to mankind?' gives rise to another question. 'Did God ever reveal himself to mankind?' I am anxious to emphasize this question, which lurks behind our topic. It makes evident how impossible it is to realize and to maintain the conviction of a real Revelation of God without applying it also to the present time. Take somebody who does not believe in any working of God; take a man for whom the Living God does not exist; how are you to convince him of the existence of a God who has once revealed himself to mankind, if God does not reveal himself to that man as living and working his salvation? But there are pious people who believe in God, not only as a law and principle, or as a great all-pervading mystery, but as a Will, as Love, that has made itself known and perceptible to man, yet who consider that the Revelation in a proper sense was finished with Christ or with the Bible.

The following survey strives to pursue the Christian thought of revelation as referring to a continued divine self-communication. This self-communication presents itself as a creating

¹ Cf. Söderblom, 'Communion with Deity', *E.R.E.* iii.

power and a saving will chiefly in three ways: (1) in Nature, (2) in History, (3) in Moral life; or (1) in genius as a part of nature, (2) in the continuity and aims of history, (3) in the individual's regeneration and forming of character. As far as this continued revelation is taking place in Christianity, it is the continued action of the Christ, the Logos. The belief in his living power and the experience of the same is the common characteristic of all Christianity.

I

God has revealed himself in Christ: so far the theologians of Pius X agreed with Professor Wilhelm Herrmann.

A strongly fortified position of adamant strength was taken by Evangelic thought, in which no single event nor any formula or writing, but Christ's inner life with the Father and Christ's divine, stern, strong love are the Revelation that is essential and for ever valid. But if a man has met God in Christ, he cannot possibly go on isolating Christ for long. He who says 'God revealed himself in Christ' says also, 'God reveals himself in Nature'. He who says 'God revealed himself in Christ', says also 'God reveals himself in history'.

The ancient Church used the word *nature* concerning Christ. Nicaea, Constantinople, and Chalcedon are three grand names in the history of dogma. But however anxious the Church may be to keep up the connexion with what was asserted and confessed in the language of that time-- 'two natures, one divine and one human'-- still we must try, by looking upon things from other points of view, to get a more informing apprehension of the real personality of the Saviour and find expressions for it. The divine, is it to us 'nature'? 'the human', *qua* species, *qua* superiority to animals, is that 'nature'? What we call nature, is it really 'nature' in the old essential meaning of the word?

In recent times another distinction in Christ's person has been made. Modern theology draws the line between nature and character, between that which was given, inherited, natural in Christ, as it is in every human being, on the one side, and on the other, that which was the result of volition, self-development; the strength and purity of love and

righteousness in him, in short, what we call in every human being its moral and spiritual life. Modern theology, the heir to this extent, of Pietism and Rationalism, has seen the saving power of Christ in his moral perfection and mighty love. This, of course, marks an advance in the conception of Christ and Revelation. But is it satisfactory? Tell me from a purely empirical and historical point of view what constitutes Christ's unique power, apart from the unique, historical conditions under which he lived in the Messianic hope of his nation and the cosmopolitan sway of the Roman Empire? Of course you answer: his spiritual and moral greatness, the earnestness of his will, the divine passion of his mercy, the energy of his sense of truth. Yes, that is the first. But can we limit ourselves to this? Take any great founder or reformer or saint; can his influence be accounted for by considering only his moral splendour and goodness? No: behind lies nature, genius. He did not make himself. Whence did he come?

To be able to acquire any approximately illuminating comparison and connexion to help us in the interpretation of Christ's person it is evident that we must turn to the extraordinary personalities of history. A conception of the divinity of Christ that excludes all relation to these is as contrary to the dogma as to the Gospel.

In a sermon of the year 1544 Luther asked: 'St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, John Huss, I--Dr. Martinus, whence have all these come?' Let Pascal have been never so earnest and holy, he could not have accomplished his work and obtained his place in God's kingdom on earth, had he not been born with the exquisite and great gifts we all admire in him. This is true in a far higher degree, and in a far deeper and more creative and mysterious sense, when applied to Jesus Christ. What I object to is that men try to understand Christ's Godhead merely by the truth, holiness, and love in his life, without considering the treasures of unparalleled gifts hidden by divine mystery already in Mary's womb. They do not take into consideration God's revelation in nature and through nature. That Jesus became the unique Centre of Mankind was due not

only to his moral beauty, but in the very first place to the mystery of the endowment accorded to him in birth—to the fact, that in him the Logos became flesh. That is the mystery of the Incarnation; we must try to get a new grasp of it. Revelation does not isolate the sanctity of Christ, but considers also the wonder of his nature, of his human flesh and blood. I might add that the complex relation between natural gifts of intellect on one side, and moral power on the other, often puzzles our poor brains; it may sometimes seem to be inequitable, but we cannot judge Reality.

God continues to reveal himself in *genius*. Genius proves that the real essence of existence is creation, not merely necessity. In other words, the inherent necessity which works behind that which our eyes see and our ears hear, is a necessary striving after, creating, producing, saving, vivifying, bringing forth new things out of the hidden treasures of existence. It is not a mechanical necessity that merely combines things already existing. For in genius breaks forth a mighty flood of creative power. No doubt, the origin of genius is determined by certain laws. Innumerable generations are behind the child in whose embryo the wonderful treasure lies dormant. Dangerous heritages, good heritages, weak heritages, subdivided in a thousand different ways, have produced diverse results in his forefathers. A combination and a mutual influence takes place from the natural gifts of his father and mother respectively, but also from earlier heritages which the parents, in a mysterious way and perhaps without either winning any advantages from them or suffering under them personally, transfer from preceding generations to the individual or individuals who, after them, are to inherit possibility of good or evil thus obscurely prepared. Then the gift of genius bursts forth apparently as suddenly and unexpectedly as those phenomena which De Vries has called mutation, thus showing that the thing remains unexplained. Concerning lower organisms, from the vegetable kingdom and the lower species of the animal kingdom, exceedingly acute analyses of the laws of heredity have been made. Of course, there are hidden laws of heredity which in part may be discovered by science. In preceding

generations there are innumerable facts and details which must be explained in the appearance of genius, to us sudden and mysterious. No mere process of addition of great and fine qualities can give such a result. The riddle of heredity and generation is, of course, very much more subtle than any process of addition. We shall never be able to analyse perfectly the causes and elements of creative genius. We shall never be able to predict it. But we know that there exists no element of chance, nothing accidental—although the absolute determinism of classical physics has been abandoned for ever by the new physics. The human eye cannot penetrate the sequence of causes and effects. Our Christian faith and our constructive outlook on life and history know something more. They know that God works in the complicated course of generations, and that the right man is there to do his work, when he is wanted.

The very fact that creative genius exists proves as clearly as one can wish, that life is essentially a continued creation, not merely the regulation of things created. For the manner in which genius works, with whatever material—with human hearts, states, armies, tones, colours, words—language, with instinctive precision, has chosen the word 'creation'. Certainly there is something original, something new in every human being. Erik Gustaf Geijer says: 'There is no man who cannot do *one* thing better than everybody else'—one of the most comforting sentences ever pronounced. But in the extraordinary outfit of creative genius the original and peculiar appears more clearly.

Poet, ποιητής, means maker, creator; poem, ποίημα, creation. The poet is a collaborator with the Creator in two respects. He is an interpreter of creation. And he is continuing the creation. The artist is helping us to understand it; whether it be the painter who reproduces a sunset or the poet who describes man's life. And the characteristic of the poet is that he is able to give life to his figures. They are taken out of reality and still they are creations of his spirit. They are living and possess in thoughts and shape something of the inexhaustibleness and the riches which characterize creation.

We are using, every one of us, words as coins in our everyday life, in the barter between men, and once in a while we put up a temporary hut or store for our thought and feeling. But the artist knows how to erect a building with language as material, which he is polishing and selecting and treating and arranging; a building, built in a severe style, created by imagination and order, not only serving for the occasion, but offering a home, a refuge, an expression even to our more or less homeless and wandering feelings and thoughts.

In genius new things appear, things which have never before existed. It is not always easy to say wherein the originality lies. But the quality of creating something which may be called new is the distinction between genius and mere talent. This peculiarity stands out the more clearly if we consider the fact that mere talent, be it ever so great, can be attained by rules and patterns. But genius itself in its turn gives rise to new rules, which are afterwards established by analysis. First comes *creation*--revelation, beauty of character, the building up of society, a work of art. Then comes *theory*--theology, ethics, political science, theory of art. It is just the same as in God's created world--first, the flower, then botany. Genius appears as a part of the Almighty's continuous creation. And so in working, genius is conscious of being part of a miracle. Plato already knew that such as are inspired say things the whole import of which they themselves are unable to grasp. Harald Hjärne wrote: 'Not all seers are able to interpret their visions.' History confirms this observation. God alone knows the import of what genius says. Coming generations do not tire of going deep into the works of genius in order to gather new knowledge and new enlightenment from them. And to the learned professors there lies a wholesome warning in my paradox, that the Great are always right, even if they contradict each other.

But in what we have said above, the whole importance of the creative activity of genius has not even been hinted at. This activity has another side, perhaps even more noteworthy, which has seldom had attention paid to it. I shall call it the organic connexion between God's entire continued creative work and the work of genius. Let me first elucidate

this phenomenon with an observation from the way in which science works.

The scientific method can fit men for all works. It gives a general view, the power of distinguishing essentials and non-essentials.

Another point is the secrecy of investigation, or rather the secrecy of the investigator. Here there is no question of obscure mysticism. Nobody can be more sternly intellectual, more averse from cheap methods, than the investigator. But as the investigation issues from, and works on the presumption that there is a connexion, the investigator also learns that he himself is involved in a mysterious association. I do not mean merely that he has predecessors, fellow-workers, and successors and that there is a certain continuity in the work of research. But an unfathomable association is to be discerned between knowing and doing, between clearness and effectiveness. A sheer desire of knowledge, a genuine bent for research shows itself in its results to be much more important for life than any activity however practically directed. Can anything be more practical than medicine? Nevertheless, it attains its best observations through a plainly theoretical method. Practice is wonderfully served and made efficient by the purely theoretical worker.

Can anything be more practical than technique? But it has made its greatest progress through pure disinterested science, i.e. research into the nature and the spirit of the subjects in question. Therefore the investigator gets the sensation of being led up to what he does not know, if only he is obedient to his method. He is the servant of an association which he cannot survey.

Men of genius are appointed to be interpreters of God's creation. Existence is difficult to understand, and often seems to be bitterly void of meaning. By their actions, their personalities, and their creations, the men of genius, and saints as the genius of unselfishness and love and patient suffering, help us to grasp the meaning of existence, not only, nay, not even chiefly as thinkers, but also as heroes, martyrs, saints, artists, poets. Their peculiar gifts point to a mysterious connexion with creation itself. I take a simple example. It

is often said—perhaps with a touch of amusing amateurism—“This sunset resembles the picture by Mr. Ekström”. Probably this is true; before him and without his pencil one did not notice those colours. Why for thousands of years did no one in Europe see the beauty of a wild mountain landscape, until a century and a half ago? Mr. Arnold Lunn has told us in his captivating book on Switzerland. Twice Luther walked through Switzerland without seeing the glory of the Alps. Elsewhere he always had eyes to see with, especially for the beauty of nature. It was not until Rousseau and Romanticism that the West was taught the splendour of the Alpine world. The hotel-keepers at Interlaken and Lucerne ought to be thankful to him. In China and Japan the splendour of the snow mountains was appreciated much earlier. But in both cases genius revealed the thing, that is, interpreted God’s creation.

Genius shows the way; and after that it is only a case of Columbus and the egg. Something of the kind reveals itself in far more important spheres of life. As regards poetical and artistic genius, no one has put the matter better than Erik Gustaf Geijer, who wrote a hundred years ago:

‘Mankind has a hard and toilsome road to traverse. Its aim and rule is what we have called the order of God. The secret of that is surely well kept in His eternal counsels, but He has also given it as a kind of schoolboy’s task to the best loved of all the beings He has created, to contemplate and work out. This is done in various and peculiar ways, as it appears to the eye; and there would be but little hope that the work will come to a good end, unless the schoolmaster takes a hand in the process. And indeed it is a terrible thing to think that the very conception of order might be lost, if it were only to be illustrated from reality. Faith, it is true, directs its eye constantly to the goal, but it sees only in part, little more than the golden cross that crowns the spire of the temple. Science searches for the ground plan, but its results are merely patchwork. Consequently God has here and there on this long toilsome path of humanity placed men by the roadside, whose peculiar qualities enable them to produce from out of themselves, in sundry ways and by sundry means, words, sounds, colours, proportions, and to set before others, *images* which emit a gleam of God’s order. This “brightness

of glory" is called the beautiful and it refreshes the mind of man."¹

We see from Geijer's words how the *interpreters* of creation and the agents of creation merge into one another.

Even more striking becomes this connexion when we come to those men of genius who have made and are making history. No genius of a higher kind has contented himself with finding existence and life meaningless and with remaining in the mire of materialism. Men of genius who, for the benefit of narrower or wider circles, have discovered an object in life when it was on the point of falling to pieces from egotistical pettiness and barren discussion, change the face of things; life, the moment before empty as an empty sack, or inert like a full sack, reawakens, gets vitality and buoyancy. Powers never dreamt of—oh, for such powers in ordinary man!—gather and are concentrated upon super-human aims. We know it from the history of the nations. Everything got a fresh start in Denmark through Archbishop Absalon in the twelfth century who has been called Denmark's greatest man, and later in the fourteenth through the great Queen Margaretha. How life in France got new *verve* and a new will through Joan of Arc! Her life had been copiously written, with a show of scientific apparatus and a masterly style but without real understanding by no less a man than Anatole France, a brain brilliant, but unable to take in the extraordinary, and anxious to belittle the great. The dry-as-dust and cruelly scholastic theologians and judges at her trial have condemned themselves by providing from Joan and several witnesses unmistakable evidence as to the historic facts. Andrew Lang saw and recognized and gallantly proclaimed the miracle of God that she was, not only to her countrymen but also to men at large. Revival took place in England under Elizabeth and under Cromwell, in Sweden under Gustavus Vasa and under Gustavus Adolphus, in Russia under Peter the Great, in the United States of America under Washington and under Lincoln, in Germany through Bismarck. Regard life and literature at the end

¹ *Svenska Litteratur-Föreningens Tidning*, July 1836; Borelius, *Erik Gustaf Geijer*, p. 179 sq.

of the fifteenth century—meaningless, degraded, sensual, egotistic—and behold the wonder: two generations later men are in earnest, a divine longing penetrates men's hearts. Their firm and vigorous minds filled their age with meaning and self-sacrifice.

Some people do sometimes long to be back in such periods, far from the misery and suffocating atmosphere of our own day. In his charming book, *In Search of Scotland*, H. V. Morton writes:

'I remember the words of Sir Philip Sidney: "I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart more moved than with a trumpet." All the chivalry of ancient warfare flowered in that fight. To read Froissart's account of it—such a careful, authentic piece of description—is to feel the ache of having been born in an inferior age.'¹

Carlyle writes in his introduction to *Cromwell's Letters*:

'Antique "Reign of God", which all true men in their several dialects and modes have always striven for, giving place to modern Reign of No-God, whom men name Devil, this in its multitudinous meanings and results, is a sight to create reflections in the earnest man!'²

Carlyle's desire that there should be a history of all heroisms means for me at the same time that there should be a history of God's continued revelation. The important point is that our eyes should be opened that we may see the heroisms in our own time. They are concealed by violence and meanness, but they exist. These heroisms of our epoch equal the greatest moral splendour that history has ever witnessed.

Deeper and farther than the statesmen go the heroes of religion. They have struggled and won, no, not won, but on their knees they have received as a gift a new certainty of the plan of God's ways. They fought for their cause and for their age, but we, the many, profited by it. God was with them, and his Holy Spirit works through them. Let me analyse one such man.

Melanchthon in a letter of 1537 characterized Martin Luther as a prophet sent by God. It is not strange that the

- ¹ Morton, *In Search of Scotland*, p. 4.

² Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, p. 1.

sorrow felt at his death took strong expression. Dr. Jonas said in his funeral sermon at Eisleben that when the times had been at their worst, the greatest prophets and men of God had lived and passed away, and their death had always been followed by a severe and terrible punishment. Melancthon in his discourse made use of the following words amongst others: 'It is not through human acuteness that the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins and of the belief in the Son of God has been discovered, but it has been revealed to us by God through this man, whom he has called.' And his funeral speech in Latin reminds his hearers of the fact that the presence of God in the Church is testified to by the chosen servants of the Lord, who are the fairest flowers of humanity. Bugenhagen spoke of Luther's high office as an apostle and a prophet and reminded his hearers of Huss's predictions. For his century Luther ranked, as Albrecht Dürer, Germany's greatest artist, put it, as a divinely inspired, *gottgeistig*, person, such as the Bible and the prophets of the Middle Ages had prophesied, that is to say, as a lofty instrument of the Spirit of God. Johan Klajus of Herzberg wrote: 'As the Holy Ghost has spoken through Moses and the Prophets in plain Hebrew, and in Greek through the Apostles, so too has he spoken good German through his chosen instrument Luther.' Far more official testimony is given by the *Formula Concordiae*, which not only calls Luther 'the foremost teacher of the Augsburg Confession', but also says that 'this highly enlightened man' (in the Latin text, 'singularibus et excellentissimis Spiritus sancti donis illuminatus heros') 'has seen in the Spirit' how things would go after his death.

The old Lutheran dogmatists devote a special *locus* or paragraph to Luther's calling, which we ought to notice as an attempt to maintain the continuance of revelation. In Johann Gerhard, the great man of Lutheran scholasticism, there is frequent mention of Luther's Call, especially in the way of defence against the Papists. For him, to refute the objections to the righteousness and the divine meaning of Luther's appearance formed a part of the work of vindicating the Evangelic communion as the true Catholic Church.¹

¹ Cf. Gerhard, *Confessio catholica, in qua doctrina catholica et evangelica, quam*

At the centenary festival of 1617 he devoted a disputation to the Call of Luther; in his dogmatics this matter is more than once touched upon and is the subject of a special section in Chapter XXVI. In the chapter on the Last Judgement, it is denied, in opposition to the Papists, that Luther was a false prophet, because he had said that the day of judgement would occur shortly.¹ In the chapter on the Church² there is a defence especially directed against Cardinal Bellarmine, of the double proposition of Lutheran dogmatics that Luther's *vocatio* was both *ordinaria* and *extraordinaria*. The evidence for the former was Luther's Call and ordination as priest in due form in 1507, in which the impurity of the ordaining bishop did not affect the validity of the office itself; his doctorate in theology in 1512 with the oath that pledged him not to teach false doctrines; and the lawful summons to the professorship at the University of Wittenberg in 1508. For an extraordinary Call Bellarmine required that it should be confirmed by miracles. Gerhard submits the question, whether it was not a miracle, that a man without the power of arms, but with the power of the Word and the arms of the unarmed, curbed the power of the whole world. For

Roma orbem domuit, sed Romam Papa subegit,
Viribus illa suis, fraudibus iste suis.
Quantum isto major Lutherus major et illa,
Orbem urbemque uno qui docuit calamo.

Rome once conquered the world, but Rome was subdued by the Pontiff;

Force was the weapon of Rome, fraud was the tool of the Pope.
How much greater was Luther than either the Pope or the City
Who by his single pen taught both city and world.

In Luther's task of reforming the Church and discovering the Antichrist, there, according to Gerhard, lay evidently something higher than the ordinary priestly Call. 'Although he was not directly called by God to that task, like the Prophets and the Apostles, and though he did not speak under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as they did

ecclesiae Augustanae confessioni addictae profitentur, ex Romano-catholicorum scriptorum suffragiis confirmatur, 1634-7. ¹ *Loci theologici*, xxxi, § 84. ² *L. T.* xxv, § 200.

(in this sense some deny that Luther's Call was extraordinary, i.e. immediate), yet it cannot be denied that there was something extraordinary and unique in this work of reformation and in the discovering of the Antichrist; and this is also shown by the prophecies on the subject in the Scriptures, and by Luther's equipment, strength of soul, success, &c. In Chapter XXVI, 'De ministerio ecclesiastico', a whole section (viii) is devoted to the subject *De vocatione Beati Lutheri*, and the line of thought given above is there more fully developed. It was not difficult for the old dogmatists to find in Luther's writings appeals to his Call to the work of the Gospel in due order. It is well known how much support Luther, like many people after him, found in the public function committed to him. For instance, 'I have often said and say it again, that I would not take the whole world for my doctorate. For I should have been bound in the end to despair of the great and difficult thing which rests upon me, if I had begun it like a sneak without Call and order. But as it is, God and all the world must testify that I began it publicly in my office of doctor and preacher.'

Johann Gerhard writes that, just as the priests in Jerusalem attacked the lawful Call of John the Baptist¹ and of Christ,² so now do the Papal clergy act with regard to Luther. As we shall see in the sequel, it is by no means difficult to find in Luther's mouth very strong utterances with regard to an extraordinary endowment for the task that had been entrusted to him by God. But such utterances—except with regard to a prophecy of Huss which Luther appropriated to himself—are not cited by Johann Gerhard. Quenstedt³ expressly writes that Luther never and nowhere appealed to any immediate or extraordinary Call. There he is quite right. But did he know Luther's answer to the papal legate, Cochlaeus, when he obliged Luther to make a precise statement in these grave matters, and finally asked him, if he had had a direct revelation. Luther answered: *Est mihi revelatum*. Like the systematic theologians who followed him,

¹ John i. 25.

² Matt. xxi. 23.

³ Quenstedt, *Theologia didactico-polemica, sive systema theologicum*, cap. xii, 3 obs.

Luther was anxious to maintain the official correctitude and continuity of his conduct; and his clear consciousness that he was an extraordinary instrument of God did not interfere with this view. It is readily explicable that the dogmatists of Lutheranism in their polemics and defence against the Papists made no use of such pronouncements by Luther on himself, which are extremely valuable and characteristic for our conception of Luther, but which were interpreted by his opponents, and are still interpreted, as evidence of godless, even diabolical, presumption. The 'extraordinary and matchless characteristics which, while not entirely coinciding with the immediate and altogether extraordinary Call of the Apostles', yet rise above the ordinary priestly Call, Johann Gerhard and the dogmatists before and after him show preferably or exclusively by means of well-known matters of fact, and only exceptionally by Luther's own strong words about himself. Aegidius Hunnius, described by his contemporaries as 'one of the foremost theologians that want to be called Lutherans', had applied to the extraordinary part of Luther's Call the term which has already been used about him, and which Gerhard and the others adopt as expressing an intermediate position between the Apostles and the servants of the Church in general.¹ Luther's *vocatio* is *heroica*. Gerhard cites six evidences or series of evidences:

1. Predictions and prophecies in the Scriptures,² and by John Huss with regard to the appearance of Luther.

2. Luther's rare and pre-eminent gifts, 'with which God has abundantly and graciously equipped this His instrument, destined to fight against the kingdom of Antichrist, such as unusual learning, excellent knowledge of languages, keenness of judgement, an altogether wonderful skill in the translation of the Scriptures, divine eloquence, and a special power of the Spirit in almost each several sentence'.

3. 'Luther's heroic courage, not intimidated by the greatest perils.'

4. His wonderful exemption from treachery and violence.

5. His own prophecies as to coming events—here Gerhard

¹ Disp. 10 in *Augustanam Confessionem* after J. Gerhard.

² Jer. li. 48; Dan. xi. 44; Mal. iv. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 9; Rev. xiv. 6.

refers to a special book about Luther's predictions and to the *locus* about the Church.

6. The remarkable success of Evangelic preaching, not through worldly power but through the Word.

Quenstedt, in his strictly scholastically arranged *Systema Theologicum*, takes up the same arguments under the question: 'An B. Lutheri vocatio ad Ministerium docendi in Ecclesia fuerit legitima et ordinaria?'¹ Amongst the additions he makes to the evidences in favour of an extraordinary divine mission may be mentioned the restoration of the doctrine of 'revivifying justification' and of the 'living deeds that flow from faith', and Luther's spiritual hymns and burning efficacious prayers.

Several of the really great saints of Christendom reveal in their measure something of God's own nature; they enable us to see how the Father of Jesus Christ liveth and worketh until now. Of none of these, however, so far as my knowledge and judgement go, does this hold good in a higher degree than of Luther, whether one looks at the originality and the prophetic significance of his thoughts or at the vigour, force, and richness of his personality as a witness to the living nearness of God. With Christ, Socrates, Paul, to name the greatest of all—and also with those who are merely 'puffed up with their own conceit'—he shared the consciousness of his own importance. As early as 25 January 1521, in a letter to his Elector, he stated that he had done everything for the salvation and blessedness of Christendom and the benefit of the German nation. In 1533 he wrote to defend himself against Duke George's accusation of inciting to insurrection:

'Such praise and glory have I by the grace of God, let it please or displease the Devil and all his creatures, that since the time of the Apostles no doctor or writer, no theologian or jurist, has so gloriously and clearly confirmed, instructed, and comforted the consciences of the temporal estates as I have done, through the special grace of God. This I know for certain. For neither St. Augustine, nor St. Ambrose (who yet are the best in this matter) are equal to me in this respect. On this I pride myself, glory

¹ Quenstedt, *op. cit.*, Cap. xii, quaestio iii.

and thanks be to God, pain and vexation be to the Devil and all my tyrants and foes.¹

For 'one should glory in the gifts of God', he says in another passage.

A superficial judgement or mere prejudice sees presumption in such words. But we had better thoroughly study the man, his unaffected humility, and his importance in the history of religion, of the revelation of God, and see him struggling against the hell of anguish and despair or 'rejoicing that he has such a gracious God and Father, nay breaking through brazen mountains and adversities of all kinds with intrepid and invincible spirit and deciding that everything is flowing with milk, honey, and wine: *Iam non mortalis amplius, sed sempiternam vitam vivens*.² No one who studies such men thoroughly can help recognizing in their words the perfect consciousness of their call, which characterizes the greatest among God's inspired prophets; this knowledge did not render them self-sufficient but humble and obedient.³

¹ Luther, *Verantwortung*, Luther's *Werke*, xxxviii, p. 103.

² Cf. J. Gottschick, *Das Verhältniss von Diesseits und Jenseits im Christentum*, p. 149.

³ The biographer of John Knox, Thomas McCrie, writes: 'It cannot be denied, that his contemporaries considered these premonitions as proceeding from a prophetic spirit, and have attested that they received an exact accomplishment. . . . The canon of our faith, as Christians, is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; we must not look to impressions or new revelations as the rule of our duty; but that God may on particular occasions, forewarn persons of some things which shall happen, to testify his approbation of them, to encourage them to confide in him in circumstances of peculiar difficulty, or to serve other important purposes, is not, I think, inconsistent with the principles of either natural or revealed religion. . . . The reformers were men of singular piety. . . . They were endowed with extraordinary gifts, and why may we not suppose, that they were occasionally favoured with extraordinary premonitions, with respect to certain events which concerned themselves, other individuals, or the Church in general?' (McCrie, *Life of John Knox*, pp. 366 sqq.)

Andrew Lang quotes the Scottish reformer: "I dare not deny . . . but that God hath revealed unto me secrets unknown to the world", he writes (*Letter to the Faithful*), and these claims soar high above mere deductions from Scripture. His biographer, Dr. McCrie, doubts whether we can dismiss, as necessarily baseless, all stories of "extraordinary premonitions since the completion of the canon of inspiration." Indeed, there appears to be no reason why we should draw the line at a given date, and "limit the operations of divine Providence." I would be the last to do so, but then Knox's premonitions are

Great men of genius when serving God consciously and with all their hearts belong to the saints. The doctrine of saints lost its importance in Evangelic theology when the cult of the saints was abolished in the name of the Gospel. In this matter I agree with the Roman Church and its theology in so far as the saints are Christian men and women who specially reveal the power of God. But divine power ought not to be assigned in a primitive way to extraordinary cases of suggestion. It ought not to be defined as a miracle, but be regarded in accordance with a Christian conception of God.¹

II

A place of honour is due to those saints of religion who have put their whole soul into serving and apprehending God's will in *history*. It is on purpose that I put 'serving' first and then 'apprehending'. For in God's kingdom and in the realm of the Spirit and of moral truth, man can see nothing, so long as he is standing as a mere spectator; only those who serve God fully and self-sacrificingly can perceive God's will. In other things one usually wants to look ahead and to understand before undertaking anything. But in God's kingdom it is the reverse. Here we enter on the second way in which God continues to reveal himself, *history*. We have already in previous lectures studied those who were the first to see a real revelation of God in history, Zarathushtra sometimes, or usually, without documentary and contemporary corroboration; once he certainly prophesied after the event (as we shall see), and he never troubles himself about his predictions which were unfulfilled, as against Queen Elizabeth.

'He supplied the Kirk with the tradition of supernatural premonitions in preachers—second-sight and clairvoyance—as in the case of Mr. Peden and other saints of the Covenant. But just as good cases of clairvoyance as any of Mr. Peden's are attributed to Catherine de Medici, who was not a saint, by her daughter, La Reine Margot, and others. In Knox, at all events, there is no trace of visual or auditory hallucinations, so common in religious experiences, whatever the creed of the percipient. He was not a visionary. More than this we cannot safely say about his prophetic vein.' (Lang, *John Knox and the Reformation*, pp. 18 sqq.)

¹ *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, III, II, quaestio VIII·xiv, represents the saints in accordance with tradition as proper objects of worship, the veneration and invocation of whom has only to be regulated so as not to encroach upon the glory of God. Delehaye, v. 'Sanctus' in *Analecta Bollandiana*, xxviii, pp. 145 sqq.

and the prophets in the Old Testament, and, under their influence, Christianity and Islam.

How alien the thought of a revelation in history was to the Græco-Roman antiquity can be seen in Cicero. In *De natura Deorum* Cicero classifies the expressions of divine providence with his customary particularity and orderliness, but he never even touches on the idea of the appearance of God in the events and associations of history. For Mosaism the marvels of history were of fundamental importance. God brought his oppressed people out of Egypt. History told of his righteousness and his grace. What is it that distinguishes the prophets and spirits akin to them from other saints and great men of religion? Characteristic of all saints it is that they have deeply experienced God's mind and revealed it for the benefit of many. But other great men of religion have sought and experienced God by flying from history into a timeless intercourse with God, as Yajñavalkya and his followers in India and several mystics in Western civilization and in the Church. The prophets communicate with God in history. Their inner experience grows stronger, clearer, and richer when expanded by God's work in history. There they hear God's voice. They hear also other voices; they hear the voices of a frivolous, unrepentant, and self-sufficient people; they see ignorance and darkness, so that sometimes everything grows dark to them; the wrecks of kingdoms falling to pieces and the self-satisfied nationalism of their fellow countrymen threaten to fill their eyes with dust. But they know that God lives and, in spite of all, holds the threads in his hands. The characteristic of prophetic piety through all times is this: God speaks to me, to us, in history, in my little history, in the great history.

We need not go back to the Old Testament to find this. The greatest witness of God's revelation in history is Christ himself. How very much did the prophets and the psalmists contribute to the work of his spirit! He builds on what they have thought and suffered from God's way of dealing with them. Jesus does not live in the mystic's peaceful corner, but he is a combatant in the midst of the confusion of battle. Jesus does not stand aloof on a hill as a spectator; he is in

the very throng of the people—although he sometimes had to go ‘up into a mountain apart to pray’. His value for every age and for every soul Jesus attained, not by abstracting himself from his own time and standing aloof from its struggles, but on the contrary by thrusting himself into that which was a matter of life and death to his people in the very epoch in which he lived. No people has more intensely lived its history than Israel. No personality is deeper rooted in history than Jesus. How he fought for this people: ‘Let the tree alone this year also.’ How he struggled with this people for its soul: ‘How often would I have gathered thy children together.’ If history be not the revelation of God, Jesus’ striving becomes incomprehensible. If you admit Christ, then you must admit history. For he stands in it with full responsibility and in violent, dramatic tension.

Christ’s connexion with history appears most clearly from his waiting for the immediate, decisive breaking in of God’s realized Kingdom. The understanding of the eschatological trend of our Lord’s message has been an important lesson for Christian theology in our day. The Kingdom was coming, Christ himself was to appear in the clouds of heaven with great glory. We cannot ascertain whether Jesus himself or only his disciples believed that the catastrophe would come in that very generation.

The fact that Christ expected an end that never came is nothing to be afraid of or to conceal. For three reasons.

1. That belief belonged to the true humanity of the Saviour, which as a matter of principle always has been maintained by the Church.

2. This eager waiting proved to be very important for our Saviour’s mission. For the eschatological tension contributed to concentrate his claims and make them solid and essential, and, at the same time, they were lifted up to an ideal height which makes them valid for all time. The moments were precious. The weak man would have shouted, flustered, and flitted about nervously from this to that, or would have given up all work and sat down, with folded hands, to look up in the sky or to speculate with the Apocalypics on what the future life would be like. He, the

strong, became calm as never before. High pressure brought about concentrated energy. For all our 'important' unnecessary things Jesus had no time. 'For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.' But for that which should be done he had plenty of time. He dealt with every individual case with the grand consciousness of one to whom the actual moment is heavy with eternity. His eye caressed the lilies of the field. His teaching went straight to the kernel of moral life.

3. The eschatological waiting was not a temporary passing phenomenon. We find it in many of the heroes of history. The end is ever near. Life is short, and our own end is near. But not only this. When our life is at its highest pitch we feel the nearness of death without fear.

The world-catastrophe gave us an unexpected commentary on the eschatological and apocalyptic writings in the Scriptures. Their seemingly fantastic drama got a meaning. The 'little apocalypse' which is contained in the three synoptic gospels speaks of the last tribulation. Have we not already experienced the beginning of travail? The drama of the Apocalypics became no longer a mere curiosity. It got life and content. The Revelation of the New Testament got many new readers. No other texts in the Scripture and the sacred literature of mankind are more able to interpret what people felt. Earlier the apocalyptic and eschatological writings had required an apology. Their interpreters tried to tone them down, to explain away their wild and many-coloured images. The feeling of safety demanded by our culture could not endure such bizarreries. But when the world's calamity had raged for some time, they no longer needed interpretation: least of all could they be explained away.

Time remains ever short in view of the Ideal, even if millions of years lie before the human race. All the deepest minds of history have, in the midst of their work, fraught with momentous consequences, lived in an eschatological atmosphere, all those whose eager longing and fiery force have left the deepest marks in the history of evolution. Darkness pressed in upon them, but within them the goal was present as a claim and an actual reality. The goal was such

that no merely human development could hold it. Therefore they felt time dark and short, and the heavenly vision near.

For them, as for Jesus, the eschatological state of expectation meant, however confusing it might look, that they beheld, behind the angel-voices and thunder of history, what is really taking place: 'the prince of this world shall be cast out', and 'the Son of Man draws all men unto him'.¹

Eschatology does not mean a pause in God's workings and a hidden God that will once more appear. Eschatology means a living God and a working humanity. In the Watchword of the Student Volunteer Movement at the end of last century: 'The Evangelization of the World in this Generation', I recognized the eschatological tone of genuine elemental Christianity.

The belief in the continued revelation of God has, ever since the days of the prophets, created a literature animated by a gloomy revulsion from the present day to a violent catastrophe or by an idea of development in brighter colours. What is more important is that certainty about God as the real actor in the drama of history has produced personalities who radiate the life of God. Let me mention some of the most important in Western European Christendom. The medieval Church and France has the brightest of them, whom we have already named, Joan of Arc; Lutheranism has Luther and Gustavus Adolphus; Calvinism has Calvin, Gaspard de Coligny, and Cromwell. History is hard to understand. Piety is wont to see there its own short-sighted ideals instead of God's plans. The vagaries of apologetics have rightly fallen into discredit. But the great fundamental idea is maintained by the sincere belief of our hearts, even though our dim-sighted eyes cannot see the application: God rules. Those who have taken a devoted part in the struggle, and the real geniuses of historical investigation, have seen it best. Let one of their rare but weighty confessions speak. Harald Hjärne said on 6 November 1892 in the University of Upsala:

'The laws of human development go their way undisturbed through the ages, with or against the will of acting persons and

¹ John xii. 29-32.

peoples. What are these laws? No one knows their innermost nature, but their effects are sometimes perceived more or less distinctly, when one listens attentively to the voices of the past. Sometimes in the very way in which events form their own connexion we catch a glimpse of something which resembles a human countenance, with a smile that is at once both severe and mild at the nations, who believe themselves to be going their own ways, but constantly go where they have never wished to go. If this glimpse is an illusion, yet the suspicion arises that the inexorable laws of development are in reality not a system of dry rules, but utterances of a Personal will, against which no other will can prevail. And in the midst of world history there rises a personality, who does not resemble any other amongst those we know. He points forward to a goal at which all the deviating paths of the nations run together in such a peace as surpasses all their plans and dreams. Belief in Christ is a power of progress and life which ever since His days has dominated the world even against its will, but which strengthens wills that enter into His service.¹

So spoke Harald Hjärne, the greatest historian of Sweden. He penetrated deeply enough into history and the events of our time to have a vision of what was to come. He was the only politician in Sweden who uttered warnings as to the Norwegian revolution of June 1905, and recommended its prevention by means of thorough negotiations. The mighty conflict between Russia and Japan was foreseen and proclaimed by Hjärne in a general account of the situation. The Japanese statesman and diplomat, Hioki, who after the war studied Hjärne's account of the development and problems of Japan, has borne witness to the clearness with which Hjärne perceived the connexion of events. In 1902 Hjärne wrote an essay on the Imperialism of the New World.² In ancient days 'pious Aeneas' rescued his Penates from the burning of Troy, 'and after long wanderings laid the foundation of a new home for heroes, where the memories and the duty of vengeance were secretly handed down from father to son, until the hour came when strength revived and retribution became possible'. Of his seed there was born in

¹ Hjärne, *Svenskt och Främmande*, p. 55 sq.

² Hjärne, *Blandade spörsmål*, pp. 297 sqq.

due time Romulus, who opened his asylum for adventurous spirits of all kinds of descent and reputation. Rome derived its ancestry and took its gods from all stocks. To them all the goddess Roma brought the glad message of freedom. With this Hjärne compares the origin of the United States:

“The Pilgrim Fathers, Penn and his Quakers, and many other oppressed champions of the faith from all parties in the wars of religion have sanctified the foundations of the new community with the blessings of piety for eternity and for its progress in this world. But who takes into account all the thieves, homicides, and debtors who were promoted by transportation to being pioneers in “the forest *primaeval*” under the education of ruthless planters and governors? Who tells of all the scalps sacrificed and taken by landgrabbers and trappers during the wars to the knife with Indians and Frenchmen?

‘From such varied elements, by combination with Dutchmen, Swedes, and Germans, the scattered settlements grew up and became self-sufficing communities, under the exhortations of delegates and advocates of the people, in spite of the officials and custom-duties of their sovereign lord, until Franklin and Washington, the Brutus and the Collatinus of the New World, “tore the lightning from the skies and the sceptre from the tyrant”. The new-born Union appeared before the world as the glittering model of self-government, and with every decade that passed, its sense of power rose, while the number of the States and of the citizens was multiplied by the expansion of colonization, by conquest, and by immigration. In our days almost every European people finds its counterpart within the framework of the mighty federation; and the genealogical tree of the nation is based not on uncertain traditions and popular lays, but on the figures of statistics and living personal intercourse. It is a rejuvenated Europe, which with its united force pushes our old divided continent into the shade.’

America has got rid of its Pyrrhus, Napoleon III, who rashly stretched out his hand to take Mexico. But the capitalistic power of the United States is growing.

‘After this nothing is inconceivable, not even an American Flamininus, who in the name of Congress shall dictate peace on the very soil of Europe and proclaim the gift of freedom and independence to jubilant small nations, when once the powers

that threatened conquest have been compelled to withdraw from the field and favour a nobler patron and master.'

But for such tasks capitalistic power is not adequate. Gold, writes Hjärne, is powerless without steel. 'He who is prepared to sacrifice his life is stronger than the heroes of the exchange or even than those of labour.'

Hjärne also maintains that the organism of every sound community must be moral and religious at the core.

'From the enchanted abyss there come only the dark powers who still fetter the conscious responsibility of man. But the will that surrenders itself to that which is lofty, is not a destructive instinct, but the solid kernel of personality, which becomes stronger and stronger as the call from on high gives light and breath. Every human community is built on the foundation of personal self-sacrificing will. If the foundation gives way, the building falls; and the necessary condition for the structure to be built high is the bearing-point of the foundation. To this all history bears witness from the days of antiquity and those of our own forefathers.'

It is the same seer and interpreter of history who sometimes fancies that he discerns over and above its varying complexes a divine countenance.

Who can any longer believe in evolution? The assured belief that the world will become better of itself was a false doctrine, doomed to be swept away by the iron besom of the world-agony. Before the deluge, during the good times, the splendour and prosperity of which will appear like a golden age to our great-grandchildren in Europe, humanity lived in a happy belief which in the future will appear as the special superstition of the nineteenth century. Men held that the world moves forward of itself. Men believed that the whole of our civilization was on its way to Paradise, until they suddenly found themselves in Hell. Then confidence in development received an irreparable shock. Evolution was an idol which had not kept the promises it had made. The distressful state of the world compels our faith to take refuge in God. It is more difficult than it was to believe in evolution. Perhaps it would pay better to believe in God.

With Grundtvig, Denmark got a prophetic genius, to

whom history, the past, present, and future was the workshop of God. He explained the signs of the times. He exhorted and judged his people according to the inspiration of the Spirit. He showed his people its place in the gracious intentions of God. Edvard Lehmann, who in his book about Grundtvig has given perhaps his finest work to his own age and to posterity, certainly a benevolent inheritance, puts him in the row of the prophets of all times, not only with the four great and the twelve minor prophets in Israel, but with 'monks and nuns in the convents of the South and the North, Russian peasants, British artisans, American preachers, highly cultivated writers, St. Francis and a St. Birgitta, a George Fox, a Joseph Smith, a Thomas Carlyle, a Dostoievsky, prophets of to-day and of to-morrow, as well as of ancient times.'¹ It is characteristic of Grundtvig's prophetic view of history that the last book that was read to him on the day of his departure, on the fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, the 1st of September 1872, when he had preached in the Church of Vartov, had come home and was sitting in his chair, was Geijer's *History of the Swedish People* and *Historical Archives*. Lehmann recognizes in him the prophet's inspiration and intuition. Further, the judge's calling was entrusted to Grundtvig. He came forth like the prophets of Israel with his penitential preaching and told the truth frankly. He judged severely like Jeremiah, against his own wishes, against his own tender heart. Love was the profound and divine part of his personality. And in spite of all, he regarded the future with an invincible hope by virtue of his inspiration and Christian faith. He looked back to the beginnings of time. He looked forward to its completion. He learned to see the will of God in the history of Denmark, as well as in that of the world. The kingdom will come, the kingdom of the millennium. The seer in the North interpreted the apocalyptic visions of the Revelation of St. John.

That existence in general and history in particular is a continued creation—let me say, a revelation of God—we and the Western way of thinking have learnt ultimately from the

¹ Lehmann, *Grundtvig*, pp. 246 sqq.

prophets and the Bible. Many enthusiasts for evolution, however, do not know it, or simply deny God's Revelation, and show by their naïve optimism that they moreover have learnt but little from the Bible and from life itself. But the fundamental idea of evolution our civilization has received from the Revelation in the Bible, and in this as well as in other respects, it literally lives on Revelation. The other great civilizations never conceived this idea. What is the final aim of existence and of history? Whenever man has had time to follow up this question, the answer has without fail been—*the eternal circuit*, perpetually going round and round; the same state of things must return. Thus India, thus Ancient Greece, thus naturalistic thinkers of to-day, Gustave le Bon, Nietzsche, Arrhenius. Whence this conformity? I answer: without the God of prophetic Revelation and of history the inevitable conclusion will be—time goes round, things remain the same for ever. For if existence consists of a certain infinite capital of skandhas or atoms, which enter into various combinations and states, the same must evidently return again. What need to work for civilization? Why should we after all strive after anything except getting free of it all? Our amiable heroes of civilization, or shall we say slaves of civilization, rejoice at the progress. 'O, there is continual progress! We leave the childish ignorance, connected with the Bible and religion, behind us.' I would say to them: Friends, what are you thinking about? What is the use of work, science, progress, when everything, after all, is doomed to perish and to begin over again, by your own theory? It is a pleasing instance of inconsistency when men, embracing this hopeless idea, still, with an assiduity that would put many Christians to shame, honestly exert their energies for the future. Orientals smile at us, smile with a wise, perhaps somewhat indulgent superiority, at the strivings and toil of the West. What is the use of it all? What childish simplicity to rejoice at aeroplanes and electricity! All your fuss is nothing but a disturbing illusion. The Orientals are right, if naturalism is right; they are consistent, they have given themselves time to follow up their train of thought. Nothing can put their

wisdom to shame, nothing can vindicate and sustain the work of civilization, nothing can give life and a soul to the muscles of Western education but the living God, nothing but the certainty that this existence is, in its principle, life, will, salvation, creation, revelation. The only thing that in the long run can give a meaning to our endeavours and save our civilization from ending in uncertainty or despair is the prophetic communion which sees God and his revelation in the course of events. Bishop Lightfoot wrote: 'Ideals are prophecies which work their own fulfilment.' Luther wrote: 'This life is not a healthfulness, but a restoration to health, not being but becoming. Not rest but training. We are not yet, but we shall be. It is not yet done, it has not yet come to pass, but it is stirring and going on. It is not the end, but it is the way. All is not yet glowing and shining, but all is being polished.' These words speak of eternity, not of the future of our terrestrial existence. But history unfolds the roll of the eschatological frame of mind.

Now the war has changed the indulgent superiority of the Orientals into an aching and well-justified wrath against our civilization which has caused or permitted such slaughter, such starvation, such humiliation of mankind. But the most clear-sighted amongst them grant that the catastrophe of Western culture is due to unfaithfulness to its religion. Even Gandhi, who repudiates any contact with the products of Western manufactures and crafts, has no word to say against Christ and Christianity. On the contrary, he quotes Christ. And he derives much of his personal power from his Christ-like humility and abhorrence of violence. Knut B. Westman recalls the attitude of St. Augustine. In *De Civitate Dei* he fears the downfall of the glorious Roman Empire and its civilization. But he knows that the Kingdom of God will outlive it. During the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work, 1925, Paul Althaus said in the Engelbrekt Church in Stockholm about the Orientals: 'They do not judge Christianity by us, they judge us by Christianity.'

To the task of Christian thought it belongs little by little to make history understood in a religious sense, that is, to make men learn to see in the whole of history, in a prophetic

way, God's miracle, his revelation. For that purpose are required, first and last, a scholarly penetration of the leading ideas of Scripture, then a broad and deep study of history, also clear and comprehensive thought, well versed in the progress of human thinking, and a truly scientific frame of mind, ever ready to modify and correct conceptions and views, however dear, in deference to better information. But it is essential that such a Christian thinker on history should place himself within the glowing beams of light that issue forth from God's mercy in Christ.

And indeed, to-day, after the miserable and gigantic breakdown of our Western Commonwealth and European politics, courage is needed to maintain, *quand même*, in spite of the bankruptcy of European statesmanship and the general unrest and actual or menacing economic disorder and distress, the confidence that history is in God's hands and that it has a goal, surpassing human understanding.

God's Revelation is not finished—it continues. Here a most essential distinction must be made. Heaven was not shut up after the manifestation of God recorded in the Bible. We see it open over the Bible and in the Bible as nowhere else, and go to it in order to see the Eternal Light shine through the grey mist of existence. God is ever revealing himself. God's continued revelation is history. Of course, I hold that the Church is God's work and God's instrument. The religious value of the Church is sometimes overrated, but often also underrated. God has entrusted the Church with the divine privilege and the tremendous duty of giving to the world in word and deed and sacrament the Grace of God. Our belief in God's continued revelation in history makes us consider, more diligently and more reverently than before, the value of men, means, and institutions, which God has given to the Church in the course of history. But God's revelation is not confined to the Church, although the Church has, in the Scriptures and in its experience, the means of interpreting God's continued revelation. The Church ought to open its eyes, more than it does, to see how God is perpetually revealing himself. The Evangelic statement that God has revealed himself once for all in the Bible is true and must be

maintained in its true sense about the divine action recorded in the Scriptures. But we often fail to learn the lesson of the Bible, that our God is a living, a still living God, who has not become older and less active than in earlier days.

Roman Catholic opinion finds the Protestant appeal to 'the Bible and the Bible only' narrow-minded, and says: 'God is in his Church. He is speaking through the ecclesiastical authority'—and at the same time this very authority is cutting off its connexions with real history and is burying itself in a mausoleum of antiquated thoughts and ideas. Against the Roman theory we thus raise two objections: (1) It makes the continuous revelation of God leave the ground of history and enter an institution. (2) It makes the continuous revelation of God leave the area of life and enter a theological system, that venerable and comprehensive Thomism, which used once to be alive, but is now a venerable memorial from the past.

God reveals himself in history, outside the Church as well as in it. Cyrus, the Persian king, is called Messiah by the prophet.¹

God reveals himself as much in the vicissitudes of nations as in the institutions of religion. If one stands on the Acropolis and allows one's gaze to fall on the waters of the Saronic Gulf along the bold coast-line from Cape Sunium to the Bay of Eleusis behind Salamis, one may ask oneself, which meant more for the history of God's dominion and the spiritual profit of mankind—Marathon and Salamis, where the Athenians fought for their state, or Eleusis, lying far within the quiet bay, where they sought consolation against the fleeting destiny of man? It may be that statesmen in certain historical situations have greater importance for God's kingdom than thousands of sermons.

It may be that some despised Utopians, dreaming and working, do more for God's plan than a most perfect and stately hierarchy or a well-balanced piety, which call them crazy. It may be that political changes and social movements mean a mightier revelation of God than the undertakings of the Church. The voice of God can speak to mankind even

¹ Isa. xlv. 1.

by lips that deny his existence. These statements are in no wise paradoxes, but are meant quite literally. In the complicated course of events the will of God may be dimly conceived by one who is fighting in the battle. No one must say to us, Lo, here is God or there. But each one must struggle at his post in the ranks. Suddenly, maybe, the mist will lift, and he will be permitted to see what God is doing.

There are courses of events in which the watchful eye of a Christian cannot but recognize the work of God. What weight have, in fact, our Churches and our religious associations with the men who now are working with heads and hearts? What does God think about it? Surely we and our Christianity stand denounced before him.

Are the Christianity and theology of to-day equal to the emergency? Does it live, does it think, does it act in the presence of the Living God, or is it confined within the insipid self-complacency of a clique, and in a kind of esoteric scholasticism? In what does our Christianity consist? In the revelation of God to us and within us, or in forms, training, mental suggestion?

The certainty of God's creation cannot be given to men and preserved in men, when they need it, by any inference from or reflections upon civilization or history, but only by God first taking men out of civilization and history to be alone with him, revealing himself to them and continuing his revelation in their lives. The distress of the soul and the mercy of God must force us out of all the strongholds of the world, that we may be able to see in the world the workings of God. We must ourselves possess a hidden life with God in order to discern clearly for ourselves and believe thoroughly in his continued Revelation in history.

III

Thus from creative genius and from history we pass on to the third sphere of God's revelation, the regeneration of the individual. What is implied, strictly speaking, by a man's being or becoming a Christian? In this connexion we, to begin with, give two answers: (1) that a creation takes place in him, that something original appears in him in a way

, analogous to genius in its manifestation; and (2) that he consciously enters into the history of Revelation.

1. God creates something new in the individual. We have discerned God's continued, mysterious creation in genius. In plain men and women also something can take place, analogous to what we said about genius. The resemblance, of course, need not consist in any peculiar intuitive or ecstatic working of the mind. Such resemblance is not essential. The resemblance lies in the result; something relatively new and original arises. This is done by the new liberty, gained through perfect submission under the will of God. Moral independence, the moral personality, the 'new man', is no more made after a recipe than the works of genius come into existence by a ready-made rule; but in a 'new man' there appears a life raised above nature, a life which has its principle in itself. When a man simply and bravely does what his conscience bids him in opposition to calculation and enticement, when he in repentance and contrition turns from sin, when a soul sincerely and unconditionally throws itself upon God's judging and saving mercy, when it concentrates itself on a whole-hearted prayer, when in the midst of confusion and temptation light is won triumphantly, whenever, in fact, a personality vindicates its liberty, then, in that sacred hour, God creates. In conversion, in the birth to a new life, when inward truthfulness is put in practice sincerely and bravely; then, at the summit of moral life and communion with God, the soul is by the power of God raised to a state resembling in originality that of genius.

I like to quote the words of Kierkegaard, that life is a poem that we are to write ourselves; but a Christian lets God write his life's poem.

How essential moral independence is to Christianity is made evident by, amongst other things, its recognized relation to the most sincere and infallible religious characteristic of Christian piety, the prayer of the heart.

The test of real answer to prayer is that the presence of God is proved, not only or not at all by fervent emotions, but by a new-born power against sin and difficulties. The moral

criterion of the answer to prayer is not only more life under favourable circumstances, rest in weariness, concentration in the midst of uneasiness and anxiety. Does prayer give you peace of mind to work in spite of violent attacks, bitter misunderstandings, and heavy afflictions? Can prayer create confidence under spiritual and bodily visitations and derive from suffering its spiritual gain? Do you, during your daily toil and in your troubles, walk with God, and speak with God? Without spiritual independence there is no true Christianity. No truth has in our time been more precisely formulated than this.

Kant is in this respect the authentic interpreter of the Gospel. And we are quite right in considering—whether approving or disapproving—Kant's teaching of the majesty and absoluteness of the moral demands as an effect or a fulfilment of the metaphysical faith which is the foundation of Christian morality. 'The paltry religion of Kant, 'Religion within the bounds of bare reason', at one point grows deep and wonderful. In face of the majesty of moral obligation he prostrates himself in the dust and worships. There he feels absolute reverence and willing obedience. He takes man as far as the claims of conscience. Herrmann takes him one step farther, up to Christ. And that is right. For the nature of the claim when unconditioned is purely formal. In Christ the claim has a concrete substance, which judges man and puts him to death, as long as he is self-dependent, but which works a divine creation in him, namely, confidence in the mercy of God, when he lets God create in him.

In placing side by side, from a certain point of view, the moral emancipation of the individual and the existence of the genius, we mean no lack of appreciation of the special position of morality in comparison with a form of humanity which is merely natural or merely determined by civilization or merely defined by the special nature of the endowments of genius. As a matter of fact between an individual life, which is animated from within by a spiritual and moral revival, and a human existence without any starting-point, thus raised above mere nature, there is the most essential difference which we are able to discern in the grades of existence,

accessible to us. None the less, moral life, when it has raised itself above mere legality and customary ethics into personal independence, exhibits striking analogies to the creation of genius.

(a) In both cases, in the moral character as well as in the genius, there is a standard, but not in the form of an external rule, not a scheme lying ready to hand or a model to imitate, but as an internal principle, the result of which cannot be determined beforehand, but which in every function forms its own rule and, when the action has been completed, reveals a consistency and a beauty in accordance with the peculiar nature of life. To let the standard mean merely a model after which something is shaped is to misjudge the nature both of creative work of genius and of individual life itself.

(b) The internal principle—for the work of art or for the moral personality—expresses itself in both cases as unconditioned, as something compulsory, but not, like the compulsion of emotional life, or the compulsion imposed from without, a compulsion that enslaves, debases, and finally breaks up and renders impossible the true unity that characterizes the morally responsible man. Rather it is something unconditioned, which, when it is obeyed in the burning zeal of creative capacity or in the travails and decisions of the life of the conscience, attains, enhances, and strengthens liberty and internal unity.

(c) This unconditioned compulsion arising from an inner principle reveals the nature of life as being in both cases a continued creation, which brings forth something new. Even in the primitive stage of religion initiation into the mysteries of the tribe often take the form of the youth being regarded as dying and then being reborn into a new and higher life so that, in very fact, he is 'twice born'. The infinitely varying symbolism, found in the rites of the mysteries and in the world of religious expression with regard to dying and revival to a higher state of existence, obtains a new content, more definite and more remarkable, when it is applied to moral renewal. 'The new man' is more than a mode of speaking: it is a revelation of a process of creation which aspires upwards.¹

¹ Cf. W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*.

2. Secondly, what does it mean that the soul meets Christ? The great Revelation of God turns into God's transaction with me. History becomes my history. 'It was done for me.' 'Given for you, shed for you.' The most important event of my life will be Jesus Christ. At the same time the individual is brought into the history of Revelation. God's creation is continued in him. That which takes place in the petty history of a man's soul receives a new significance, it becomes God's way of dealing with his child. The drama of the world takes hold of the individual soul. He finds that his own history means a choice between God and the Devil. Shall God create or shall the Devil destroy in him? God's struggle against evil, lethargy, and death is manifested throughout history. Every human being must take part in that grand and perilous fight between Life and Death, between God's revealing miracle and darkness.

The difference between religious research in general and Christian theology in particular consists in the fact that the belief in revelation is an essential part of the latter. For Christian theology the history of religions is a divine self-communication. The comparative study of religions in general leaves the question about revelation open. He who practises it may be inspired by the conviction that a supernatural reality is lying behind the phenomena of religion. Or he may deny the belief in the spiritual which is fundamental for religion. Or he may remain inquiring and uncertain about the revelation, certain only of the impossibility of knowing anything about it. Or he may lack interest in the question about the truth of religion. Different views as regards the idea of revelation may of course not influence the method of research and the historical and psychological investigations in such a way that these are displaced in one direction or another by dogmatism. The remedy against such mistakes (faults) is not to forbid the investigator to have a certain conviction, but solely to carry out the investigation rightly, conscientiously, and seriously, and to submit readily to perceived truths.

A part of Biblical belief in revelation is the conviction that a portion of the history of religion is revelation in a stricter and fuller sense than is the rest of the same history. The doctrine of a special revelation must be tested in the light of historical reality. A sufficiently thorough orientation allows us to state that the special revelation which by Biblical faith has been marked out within the general revelation approximately corresponds to a special type of religion. This we call the terminology of Usener, the religion of revelation. But the name does not give any statement of the metaphysical question regarding divine self-communication. We only establish the historical and psychological peculiarities of the prophetic, personal, or vocational religions in question. This type of religion goes back to special qualifications. Its peculiar essence is characteristically and essentially different from the comprehension of the Old World in general. And this difference can still be discerned in such schools of modern thought as consciously or unconsciously are descendants of the religion of revelation.

Religious research distinguishes the religion of revelation as a definite type within the history of religions, and in the same way the Christian faith marks off a special sphere of revelation. But this marking off cannot mean an absolute difference either in space or in time, just as religious research is unable to nullify the mutual connexion between all kinds of religion. All forms of religion are united in a common group of phenomena, and this union corresponds to the prophetic and Christian belief in a divine self-communication also outside the 'chosen people' and Christendom. It may be difficult to decide what it is in a certain form of religion that constitutes its trait of revelation from a Christian point of view. And it becomes impossible if we employ an intellectualistic view. But a measure of revelation, i.e. of divine self-communication, is present wherever we find religious sincerity. That has been expressly declared by the belief in revelation within and without Christianity.

I have made an attempt to indicate the universal application of the belief in revelation as regards time. According to Christian conviction the divine self-communication is for

all ages valid and inexhaustible in the sacred history, in Christ's own personality. But it is equally certain that belief in revelation cannot be maintained unless it is extended beyond the period of the Bible. Of course only outlines can be drawn here; attempts to draw a more precise map of continued revelation can scarcely be made without the risk of profanation or subjectivism. But it is desirable and necessary to supplement the certitude of a continued revelation with a concrete content and to interpret it.

The three points which have been examined here: genius, history, and the spiritual personality, are in my opinion the most important factors for the entire history of religions. They do not apply to monotheism, which is often a theoretical or political ground of unity, nor to the general development of morals, which certainly exercises influence on, and is influenced by religion, but is in no wise uniform with the development of religion. These points concern (1) the connexion of religion on various stages and in various senses with a hero, a saviour, or a prophet, in particular with a divine personality working on earth, whether he be a deified man or a humanized mythological creation or Christ; further, (2) the relation of religion to history; and (3) the place of the ethical values in the sphere of salvation and cult.

* * * * *

When God's rule has penetrated man's heart and life, so that the divine love and righteousness become the main factor, we speak of a saint. But the idea of saints is too great a thing and too much neglected in Evangelic-Catholic Christendom to be handled here only at the end of this lecture. We had better devote an entire lecture in my second series to the doctrine of the saints. Here I give only my definition: a saint is he who reveals God's might. Saints are such as show clearly and plainly in their lives and deeds and in their very being that God lives.

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